

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Schunk Lodge  
other names/site number Schunk Cabin

## 2. Location

street & number Approximately 1 mile north of Red Grade Rd and Big Goose RS-  
Bighorn National Forest  
city or town Big Horn  
state Wyoming code WY county Sheridan code 033 zip code 82801

x

not for publication

vicinity

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this x nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property x meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide x local

Signature of certifying official/Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government \_\_\_\_\_

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government \_\_\_\_\_

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register  
determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register  
other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Action \_\_\_\_\_

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## 5. Classification

### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

### Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

<input type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

### Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
7	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
7	0	<b>Total</b>

### Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

### Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

## 6. Function or Use

### Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/camp

### Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/camp

## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER/Log Cabin

### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: concrete

walls: log

roof: metal

other: stone

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### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

#### Summary Paragraph

Schunk Lodge is a complex of privately owned buildings on the Bighorn National Forest, in northern Wyoming. The site is at 7,600 feet on the margin of a conifer forest and large open grassland. This complex is distributed over approximately one acre and includes seven buildings. The buildings are all log construction and fit in well with the surroundings. The main cabin appears to have been built under a Forest Service permit which allowed grazing, operation of a dude ranch, and as a stage stop on a mail route. Records indicate that the permit was converted to a recreation residence in 1924. The main cabin was begun in 1910 and the other six buildings were built between 1933 and the early 1940s. The more recent buildings are: an icehouse, a bathhouse, a powerhouse, a bunkhouse, a saddle barn, and an outhouse. Another bunkhouse was removed in 1985 at the request of the Forest Service. All buildings have been maintained to preserve their historic integrity.

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### Narrative Description

The following account is condensed from Dr. A.E. Adkins (property owner, 1927 to 1933) in a letter dated 1933.

“In the year 1910 N.D. Jones, a rancher from Dutch Creek, secured a mountain permit in the Bighorn Mountains to erect a log cabin, one mile north of Big Goose Ranger Station. It consisted of two rooms, the lumber being obtained from the Babione Sawmill which then operated on Mill Creek, about three miles from where he was to build his cabin. In the year of 1914, Mrs. Jones decided to operate a dude ranch on a small scale. In 1924, the Jones’ cabin was purchased by Chris Schroeder and Dr. A.E. Adkins. In 1926, the cabin being too small, was enlarged to a four room structure, two bedrooms being built on the north end.”

This historical accounting does not concur with Forest Service records which pick up with issuance of the permit to C. E. Greene in 1924, transferring to Geo D. Nottingham on December 8, 1926 and then Nottingham transferring the property to Dr. A.E. Adkins in 1927. None of these records are on file with the Sheridan County Clerk or Treasurer’s records. The Schunk family has continuously owned the property since 1933, when Dr. William Schunk and his wife Edna, and his brothers Peter and George purchased the cabin. During the course of their ownership the family modified the main cabin and added several other structures. Each is described below. All structures have modern metal roof for fire protection in this western forest setting.

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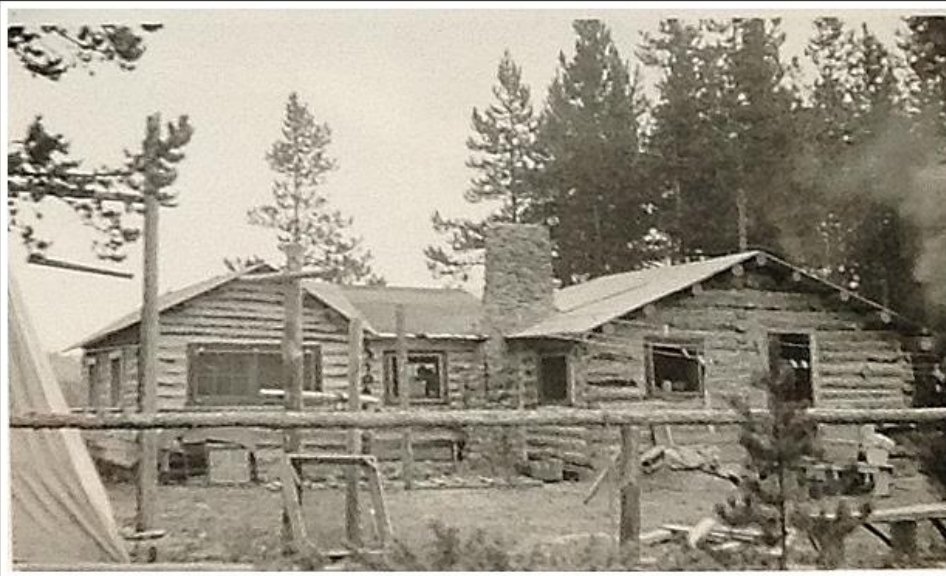
*Sometime prior to 1926 - before the four bedrooms were added*



*1932 when purchased by the Schunk Brothers*

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*photo taken from the west - 1934*

#### **Main cabin, 1910, contributing**

This building was begun in 1910 and although it has been modified, the historic character and architectural style were retained. The center section existed first (see above photos) and was approximately 16' x 17', with an extension on the south end of an additional 12' to the length. The two bedroom addition, 12' x 22', to the north end was added before 1932. (see above photos). When the Schunks purchased the cabin in 1933, a bedroom was added onto the SE corner giving the plan-view its unequal I shape with maximum dimensions of 30' x 40'.

- Foundation: The cabin has a concrete perimeter wall which is not original. This modification was also used to replace rotten bottom logs on the east side.
- Walls: All exterior wall are made of log and have from 9 to 18 courses. At least two types of corner connections systems were used: square-notched corners and butt joints into one another and are covered by wide rough cut lumber trim boards. All walls have concrete chinking.
- Windows: all the windows in this building are wood-framed multi-pane features. Two primary types were installed: six-pane awnings with a three-over-three design and four-pane horizontal sliders with a two-over-two arrangement. There at least 21 windows in the building.
- Roof: Since there have been several modifications the structure has a complicated footprint with a matching hip and valley roof. The roof consists of two east/west oriented gables that were connected by a north/south gable. Rafters and purlins appear to be round log. The rafter ends are not exposed. Three brown aluminum skylights were added; two are on the south roof, and one on the east roof.
- Chimney: In 1934 a shed extension was built to expand the kitchen and the rock fireplace was added. The chimney is a large native stone column with the stone incorporated into the outside wall.
- Decoration: There is a flagstone patio/walkway at the main entrance and the roof partially extends over this feature. The gable on this extension has a horizontal sawn log siding facade.

Other than the addition of the concrete foundation, metal roofing, and skylights there have been no structural changes since 1934.



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### **Ice house, 1940, contributing**

The 11' x 13' springhouse, aka "icehouse" has a concrete slab foundation and log walls made with lapped square-notched corners. The roof is a simple gable made with large diameter log purlins that extends over the door. The gable wall has 17 courses of log. There is no chinking and one stained plank door. This structure is built over a creek so has a partial floor. Chief architect and builder was John Grandbouche.

### **Finn house, 1940, contributing**

This building measures 12' x 22' and has a concrete perimeter foundation. Like the ice house and powerhouse the corners are lapped square-notched construction. The side walls have 14 courses of log and the gable ends have 19 courses. There are two single-pane and two 2-paned stained awning windows. The door is rustic wood with four panels which is flanked with native stone facade. There are two interior metal chimneys and one exterior furnace box to stoke the fires. Originally there was another furnace box on the west side of the doorway which was used to heat water for the bathhouse but the water barrel was replaced with a propane water heater and the barrel opening walled up.

### **Power house, 1944, contributing**

The 12' x 19' building generates power for the entire site. It is a three story building on a stepped concrete foundation. Its walls are primarily stained square-notched logs although the water wheel level appears to have been more roughly made and the west wall of this level has rough plank siding and a wood door to access the "wheelhouse room." The north wall has 28 courses of log, while the wall above the wheel has 21 courses. The wall behind the water wheel has grey T1-11 siding instead of logs. In 1972 the original oak water wheel was replaced by a steel wheel that is 10 feet in diameter and 3 feet wide.

A stained horizontal-plank door with a fixed window in the east wall provides access to the second floor. Half of the 19' length of this room is a raised platform to accommodate the height and width of the waterwheel. There is also a raised corner platform, which is directly over the ground floor door, to access the wheelhouse room during winter. For many years there was a supplemental generator for low stream flow times as well as winter power. The Schunk family refers to this floor as the art gallery because it contains photographs and log books which record some of the history of the site. This floor has three single-pane windows in white painted wood frames which may be replacements.

Access to the top floor is via an elevated 38' long wood boardwalk with log railings. A portion of this level is a covered porch which meets the boardwalk. The wood door has two panels; one of which is a frosted and etched pane. There is a small balcony on the back side which can be reached by a pair of French-door style frosted and etched windows. This level has five white painted four pane wood awning windows. The roof is a simple gable made with log purlins.

### **Bunk house, ca. 1934-1936, contributing**

The 12' x 14' bunkhouse has a concrete slab foundation and saddle-notched log walls. Each wall has 9 or 10 courses of log while the gables are vertical board and batten planks. The roof is a simple gable with rough 2 x 4 brackets. The three wood casement windows have four panes each. The door has plank boards with half log battens. This building originally served as a tack room and granary but has been converted to a bunkhouse after its twin building and the original bunk house was ordered removed by the Forest Service.

### **Saddle Barn, ca 1940, contributing**

The 14' x 28' saddle barn is clad with rough unpeeled log siding with mitered corners and sits on a concrete perimeter foundation. The roof is a simple gable with milled lumber rafters, sheathing, and purlins. Like the main house the roof extends over the doors to form a covered patio. The gable is over the patio has a

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combination of horizontal and vertical sawn log siding. The large set of double leaf inset garage doors are made of grey board and batten with three panes each. There is a man door of rustic five panel stained wood. There are three white painted wood fixed windows and one white painted wood casement window.

**Outhouse, ca 1940 contributing**

The 4' x 4' outhouse has a rough concrete foundation, cladding of stained plank boards with ½ pole battens, and a shed roof with green standing seam metal. The door matches the building's cladding.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations N/A

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Conservation

Architecture

### Period of Significance

1910-1967

### Significant Dates

1933

### Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

### Architect/Builder

Grandbouche, John

Schemmer, Vincent

### Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance begins in 1910 when the initial permit was granted to N.D. Jones. At that time the first section of the main cabin was built. The period of significance ends in 1967 which represents a point 50 years prior to the preparation of this nomination.



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**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)**

N/A

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The Schunk Lodge is significant at the local level under National Register criteria A and C. The site is eligible under criterion A in the area of conservation due to its association with historic events: management of public lands (permitted uses like ranching, commerce, and recreation residence), development of transportation systems, and association with the regional conservation movement. The Schunk Lodge hosted many politicians, government officials, prominent organizations, and personalities in the regional and national conservation movement of our national forests and water usage. From 1933 and well into the 1960s the lodge was Dr. Will Schunk's mountain headquarters for conservation and wilderness preservation efforts hosting nationally renowned conservationists and politicians. It was the perfect retreat for family reunions, dignitaries visiting Wyoming, artists, philanthropic organizations, Boy Scouts, and assorted Sheridan College events. Additionally, in its very early years it had a commercial role in the stage and mail route crossing the Big Horn Mountains.

The Schunk Lodge complex is also eligible under criterion C for the log construction of its various buildings. This complex of buildings is representative of the rustic architecture which is typical of the Mountain West. The various building's construction and uniqueness are well preserved examples representative of mountain home log construction.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

The original Schunk cabin was started with a mountain permit in 1910 by a rancher, N.D. Jones approximately one half mile from the Morrow Station. There was permitted cattle grazing in this naturally large grassland or park area. "In the year of 1914, Mrs. Jones decided to operate a dude ranch on a small scale", according to a letter written about the cabin history by Dr. Adkins in 1933. There was a sign (it has been lost) that read "Mrs. Jones Meals" Upon re-roofing the lodge, the Schunk family came across a poem about Mrs. Jones' hospitality written on a piece of wood and dated July 22, 1915. Lori Harter read somewhere in her past that Mrs. Jones had a sign in the kitchen "Hamburgers 30 cents" but that sign was stolen from the cabin in the 30s. Just to make this narrative more interesting, the Forest Service records say that "this site was originally a stage stop during the early part of the 20th century". There are few records for this time and place but it appears that it did have some commercial activity.

According to the Forest Service records the site of the Schunk Lodge was a stage stop on the Big Horn-Woodrock-Hyattville Road. Bighorn Forest Supervisor, James F Conner (1940) wrote in his book on the history of the Bighorn National Forest that "there are two accounts given as to why this road was established. The first account is by Nora B. Kinsley, D.A.R., State Historian."

There was a growing need and an insistent desire for mail and freight communications between settlers of the east and west sides of the Big Horn Range....that during the summer of 1893 the U. S. Postal authorities were convinced that northern Wyoming was settling up rapidly enough to justify increased mail facilities; and decided to establish a route between Big Horn and Hyattville if a practical pass across the snowy range could be secure. ....The test to be made was for an all-year route. Consequently, the trail blazer was not to make a summer excursion of his work. In March of 1894 (one of the two reputed worst months of the Big Horn Mountains) Frank Grouard

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received orders to cross the range and find a practicable mail route, - "one that could be traveled at all seasons of the year." This man was one of the most famous Government Scouts with a service period of nineteen years.....His only companion....named "Shorty". They proceeded by snow-shoes... Besides their firearms, they carried one blanket apiece, and rations for five days. They were on top the range for eight days, three of which were spent in huge snow drifts without fire or food. They finally found their way to Hyattville in a very serious condition. After two weeks recovery.....Grouard returns across to Fort McKinney without his companion and delivers his report. His report was accepted....and the mail route established.

The second account was compiled by Ranger Veeder from information furnished by old time settlers in the vicinity of Big Horn.

About the year 1892, the people of Sheridan County decided that the country could be developed if some influential men and capitalists could be induced to come here. If communications and trade also could be established with the Big Horn Basins country. Mr. Edward Gillette, a civil engineer, then surveyed a road from the town of Big Horn across the Big Horn Mountains and on to Hyattville. The purpose of the road were to open the Dome Lake area as a recreational center for Omaha Bankers, establish communications with the Big Horn Basin country in the way of mail service and trade, and freight lumber and logs from the Hulse and Farnum sawmill located along the road and on the West Fork of Big Goose Creek. ....About 1897 or 1898 the road was completed. The mail was carried by wagon, on horseback, on sleds and men packed on snowshoes. Much hardship was encountered. Leaving Big Horn, the first stop was at the Morrow Cabins at Big Goose Creek crossing, the location being approximately that of the Big Goose Ranger Station.

There were two more stops, this being a 27-hour-long trip (*Judy Slack....pg. 83*). The wagon ruts are still visible there today (*Rosemary Schunk, January 4, 2017*). Vic Garber told Rosemary Schunk that they cut hay on Morrows 140 acres of deeded land on the east side of the creek (East Fork Big Goose) near this same stage stop. Also note that 40-80 acres of this deeded land was sold to the Forest Service for the Big Goose Forest Service Ranger Station.

Dr. William F. and Edna Schunk (two of Will's brothers, Peter and George, were short term owners of two and three years respectively), bought the property July 10, 1933, from Dr. A.E. Adkins. Dr. Schunk and his brothers began construction of additions to the main cabin the year of purchase. Mr. Vincent F. Schemmer was the architect who drew the plans for the south and west additions to the main cabin and fireplace. In 1934, Mr. Schemmer spent his weekends at the cabin rebuilding the fireplace in the main cabin. The rock for the fireplace was hauled by Model A vehicle from near the mines. The day that Mr. Schemmer was to come to the cabin to light the first fire, he was crushed to death in an accident at Fort McKenzie. The other buildings followed, primarily 1939 to 1940 with the Powerhouse the last building in 1944. All buildings remain mostly unchanged today as they did when built 73-84 years ago. Edna Schunk's brother, John Grandbouche, was the most instrumental person in many of the building's construction.

Dr. Will and Edna had three children; Louise born 1931, Billy born 1933, and Edward born 1938. The children, along with any cousins of the moment or friends, lived at the cabin full time during the summer and were taken care of by a nanny while the parents maintained their jobs off the mountain in Sheridan. There are wooden pegs on the back side of the cabin to the left of the door that held Louise's sterilized milk bottles. During the summers of the 1940s, she had two milk cows for fresh milk, butter and cream that she sold to clients around the mountain. Her brother, Bill, supplied eggs from his chickens.

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The first significant addition the Schunks made to the site was the saw mill. Prospecting at the head of Edelman Creek (for gold) in the Cloud Peak Wilderness Area began in 1898 (*Bonney and Bonney p.546*). It has been hearsay in this area that a few of the mines were “salted” with gold from Colorado to attract money from Eastern investors. According to my mother, Louise Schunk, the secret goal was to build a road, “called the Million Dollar Trail” for the trappers to bring out their furs in the spring. Regardless, this venture was short lived (maybe less than ten years) as no mineral deposits of commercial value were found. The mining equipment was left behind. In the later part of 1930, Louise Schunk (daughter of Will and Edna), John Grandbouche, and Marlin Lamb, packed out, by horseback, the iron rail tracks and iron carriage wheels of the ore cars from the old mines at Rhinehart Lake to Coffeen Park, then the remaining 10 miles from Coffeen Park to the cabin by a Model A truck. These parts were reassembled at the Schunk Lodge into a saw mill. This was used to mill the logs used on many of the buildings on the property as well as a new cabin for George Schunk, which has been known as the “Ponty” cabin for many years. With the use of the saw mill, logs could be milled to specific size and is undoubtedly why the newer buildings did not require chinking. Per request of the Forest Service, the saw mill was removed in the 1980s. The saw mill was moved by Bill Schunk to Idaho where he used it to build himself a home. All that remains is the 30” diameter sawblade.

The second significant addition was water. From early photos, it appears that the cabin’s water source came from a 2+ inch pipe that was inserted in Ranger Creek, approximately 940 yards south of the cabin. Hand digging, supplemented with dynamite, a diversion creek along the same path as the existing pipeline progressed for several years. In the fall of 1939, the property was surveyed and construction of the Ice House commenced and June 19<sup>th</sup>, 1940, this “new” creek played its first important role. Once the creek reached the cabin, it made a bend and was funneled through the newly constructed Springhouse/Ice House with its open-planked floor. It then meandered through a meadow and back to Ranger Creek. The following year, the creek played its second major role. While the Finn House was under construction, a small swimming hole was dug just east of the bath house to accommodate “finn bathers”. The term ‘finn bath’ refers to the Finnish custom of relaxing in a sauna until the heat becomes uncomfortable. The bather then jumps into cold water, then repeats the cycle.

The creek’s third major role was providing water to the Powerhouse (constructed in 1943-44) which provided electricity to the entire compound. In accomplishing this third achievement, the creek was split approximately 10’ from the ice house and two controlled diversion points were installed. One lateral continued to run through the ice house and the other lateral meandered  $\frac{1}{8}$  of a mile to the Powerhouse. Since the DC power runs continuously once the creek is running, the level of the lights’ brightness are controlled at the diversion points.

As mentioned above, the cold creek running through the Ice House served two fundamental purposes; it kept the building cool enough for a large variety of select food products, and it served as a large kitchen pantry outside of the main cabin. A misstep in the ice-house resulted in a wet foot. Visitors marveled at the building’s simplicity, charm, and uniqueness.

In 1940, construction of the bath house began. Dr. Will’s brother-in-law, John Grandbouche, played a huge role in its design and construction. The main and most unique feature in the bath house was the “Finn” room, fashioned after the Finnish Sauna. The room had four levels of benches, 11’ long, for personal heat tolerance. The top shelf was not for amateurs. There were two wood stoking barrels incorporated in the front of the bath house; one stoked the Finn fire and one stoked a hot water tank. Surrounding the Finn barrel from the inside of the building was a large cage filled with rocks and iron from the vicinity’s abandoned mines. When bathers were “hot and sticky” water was doused on the hot rocks causing a blast of steam that made the icy cold stream sound like a great idea. The first fire was lit and stoked by Dr. Will August 23, 1941. Tradition was

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established that evening....women first, men last. Dr. Will's philosophy was that..."it's healthy and there's no question but that bathing in steam at 175 degrees is an effective cleanser". Finn baths were an unforgettable experience for many guests that took advantage of the opportunity. Many articles were written about the infamous Finn House at Schunk Lodge and the participants themselves have written extensively about their Finn experiences in the cabin log books.

The next building to be constructed was the Power House in 1942. Design and construction engineers were Dr. Will and, again, brother-in-law, John Grandbouche. They constructed the wheel in Dr. Will and Edna's back yard in Sheridan during the winter of 1943. They hauled the water wheel up the mountain on a Chevy flatbed truck in May of 1943. The original oak wheel, 10' diameter x 3' wide buckets was installed in the ground first and the building was built around it. A historic photograph shows the construction of this building. It was intended that the power room would produce both AC & DC power but the project was redesigned.

The original power room that never came to fruition (now the mid-level) turned into an art gallery because Dr. Will and Edna had received so much memorabilia and photos. Today, that room remains "the Art Gallery" and it houses 80 years of history, artifacts, and photos. The upstairs was, and still is, referred to as Dr. Will and Edna's "honeymoon Suite". The building in its entirety is the "Power House".

The waterwheel that generates power for the entire site, is the vertical overshot type. It is unique in this area and most likely beyond. Inside the power room next to the wheel, are a series of three hand built wooden sheaves, each with sets of three belts. After many years of tarring the buckets, it became too heavy to turn from whatever water was available in the ditch. A new wheel was crafted by Edward Schunk out of metal and installed in October, 1972.

## **Wilderness Preservation**

Dr. Will's love for the Big Horn Mountains, Schunk Lodge, and the wilderness were well known in Sheridan. He was humbled by wildlife of all species and felt blessed by the natural beauty of the mountains. Gazing from the pasture at Schunk Lodge to the south, the high country beckoned. The paramount experiences of his life were pack trips to Lake Solitude and he wanted to share this experience and the pristine beauty and tranquility of the Cloud Peak Primitive Area with others. Between 1933 and 1948, Dr. Will had visited Lake Solitude in the Cloud Peak area 42 times, each time with neighbors, friends, family, medical associates, journalists, artists, photographers, and wilderness preservationists from the East Coast to West Coast. Pack trips into the high country were limited only by winter. Inherently, Dr. Will spent a lifetime fervently lobbying for the preservation of the Big Horns and to safeguard the primitive area for posterity.

As early as 1932 the area around Cloud Peak was known as the Cloud Peak Primitive Area. At that time a dam was proposed at Lake Solitude. Local resistance to the project led to designating 94,000 acres as a primitive area. In the 1940s a proposal for an irrigation project again was centered around Lake Solitude. A guide book on Wyoming's mountains and wilderness areas describes the potential impact the project would have had on the area.

As you enjoy this unchanged and natural view you can be grateful to the citizens who defended Lake Solitude, who spoke at Bureau of Reclamation hearings held in Sheridan and Basin on February 2 and 4, 1948. From this overlook, Reclamation engineers had stood, seeing none of the beauty, visioning only a damsite at the outlet 70 ft high and 565 ft long. Persuading a few landowners in the Paintrock

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area to back them, the engineers planned a 16 mile, 1-½ million dollar road to this point, plus downstream canals and pumps, all to irrigate the bleak, almost desert land (some of it named 'Alkali Flats') around Hyattville and Manderson. Lake Solitude would have fluctuated as much as 50 feet. (Bonney & Bonney, p563)

The constant demand by some special interest advocates would have forever destroyed the serenity of Lake Solitude and surrounding area were it not for the outcry and lobbying against this agenda. Dr. Will was one of the most outspoken opponents as well as an early advocate of Congressional Legislation to establish policy for wilderness preservation. Dr. Will spoke out at public meetings and organized opposition to the proposed project. He often invited influential people and officials to tour the area with the Schunk Lodge serving as the launching point for expeditions into the Cloud Peak area.

In 1947 and 48, Dr. Will roused the Wilderness Society and invited one particular guest to Wyoming and to Schunk Lodge; Howard Zahniser, Executive Director of the Wilderness Society and member of its Governing Council. He was editor of *The Living Wilderness*, and prominent in the drafting of the Wilderness Bill in 1955 and 1956. He was also credited as the chief architect of the proposed National Wilderness Preservation Act. Zahniser was widely regarded as the leading proponent of wilderness protection in the country. Mr. Zahniser went on what would be, the first of three pack trips to Lake Solitude and the Cloud Peak Primitive Area.

With careful diplomacy Dr. Will Schunk got influential people from across the country such as the Izaak Walton League of America, the Sierra Club, Wildlife Conservationists, Outdoor and Nature journalists and many other proponents of conservation and wilderness preservation involved. Articles lobbying for the wilderness legislation and "Save Solitude" attracted Nature Magazine, The Denver Post, The Living Wilderness, National Geographic, Post Magazine, Saturday Evening Post, and Dude Rancher, to name a few. These associations resulted in more public awareness and pack trips into the high country.

Dr. Will and Edna were honored when Howard Zahniser returned to Wyoming in July of 1957 with other members of the Wilderness Society for their Annual Meeting at Schunk Lodge. Edna made an entry in the cabin log book "I know it was a great privilege for us when Zahniser asked if the National Council Meeting could be held here and for it to have become reality has exceeded all of our wide experiences". In attendance from the Wilderness Society were Dr. Olaus Murie/President, Harvey Brome/Vice President, Howard Zahniser/Executive Secretary, Michael Nadel/Assistant Executive Secretary, and most members of the Wilderness Society Council. Following the meeting, a large pack train with several of the Wilderness Society Council members left Schunk Lodge... destination...Lake Solitude. Howard Zahniser passed away suddenly on May 5, 1964, but the Wilderness Act was signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson in September 3, 1964.

Other notable excursions to Lake Solitude and the high country with Dr. Schunk and his children included guests such as James Algar, a Walt Disney screenwriter, David S. Boyer, a writer for National Geographic Magazine, and artists Hans Kleiber and Bernard Thomas. All of these folks were guests at the Schunk Lodge.

The Schunks provided pack and saddle horses and two wranglers to Orrin and Lorraine Bonney and their team when they did their research in the Big Horn Mountains Cloud Peak Wilderness area for their book Guide to The Wyoming Mountains but specifically the sub book, "Field Book: The Big Horn Range- including Geology & Cloud Peak Wilderness." They wrote many guide books for mountain climbers. The Bonneys were activists for the Sierra Club and were advocates for wilderness and wild lands protection. They were also active in

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fighting for the creation of the Wyoming Wilderness Act and documentation in their guidebooks was instrumental in drafting the details of boundaries of the original designated Wyoming Wilderness.

The Schunk family regularly keeps log books that each of their guests signs when they arrive at the lodge. Volume I, page 33 of cabin log registers was a memoriam to Vincent F. Schemmer in 1934. He was 33 years of age when his accidental death occurred. Schemmer was born in 1902 in Iowa. At the time of his death he was employed by the Northwestern Engineering Company and had a wife and three-month old son. He was the architect of the south and west additions to the main cabin and builder of the fireplace.

At this date we are on Volume VIII. There are 500 legal pages in each volume and each with an estimated 5000 +/- signatures. Granted, a large number of those entries are those of Will and Edna's children, their grandchildren, great grandchildren and great-great grandchildren and generations of cousins, but there are many thousands of entries from visitors from coast to coast and some from across the sea. There is a wealth of history, memories, stories, art, and signatures penned in these logs.

### **Recreation Residences on the Bighorn Forest**

The Schunk Lodge has a permit as a recreation residence on the Bighorn National Forest. From its inception the Forest Service has been tasked with managing forest lands and their various uses. The Organic Act of 1897 allowed the Forest Service to grant permits to private citizens for various uses of the forests. The first known permit for a recreation residence on the Bighorn National Forest was issued on May 1, 1911 to C.H. Parmelee. The Occupancy Permit Act of 1915 specifically addressed the permitting process for summer homes. However, a true recreation residence program was not fully realized until 1924 following an order from the national Forest Service leadership to the field offices to formalize a recreation residence permitting process and program. A historic context on recreation residences explains the development of the program.

In 1924 President Calvin Coolidge formed the "National Conference on Outdoor Recreation," in order to respond to the growing social demand for increased recreational opportunities. Leon Kniepp was given temporary leave from the Forest Service to help organize and run the conference, and to find strategies to implement the ideas formulated during the conference. One of the promotions that resulted from the conference was to increase use of the National Forests for recreation. Though not specifically stated, the promotion of recreational summer homes must have been one of the initiatives. (Laurent, p19)

In response to the increases national focus on the promotion of recreation on National Forests, the Bighorn National Forest developed a recreation plan that developed policies for summer homes. According to the plan the forest began to map locations and formalizing summer home groups. In 1940 forest policy was changed to stop the creation of new summer home groups as the country's focus shifted to World War II. After 1940 recreation residences continued to be permitted in existing summer home groups that had been previously plotted.

During this period between 1924 and 1940 the demand for recreation residences noticeably increased. One of the key factors in this increase was improvements in transportation into the forest. Highway 14 to Burgess Junction was completed in 1926. Other roads completed during this period included "Highway 16, the Red Grade Road out of Big Horn, Wyoming, completion of US Highway 14 from Burgess Junction to Shell, Wyoming by 1934, and the establishment of US Highway 14A from Burgess Junction to Lovell, Wyoming by

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1935-36.” (Laurent, p21) Another factor was the increasing availability of inexpensive labor, especially during the Depression years.

During the earliest period of the development of recreation residences between 1911 and 1924 the residences were often developed on isolated lots and were fairly simple in design. They were of log construction from trees on or near the building site with corner notching styles that varied according to the knowledge and skill of the builder. They were usually one or two rooms with a simple gable roof. Historic photos of the Schunk Lodge from this period show that the initial portion of the lodge dating to this period fits this description.

The recreation plan developed by the Bighorn National Forest in 1924 described a basic appearance and aesthetic for recreation residences. At one point the plan states, “Since the Forest furnishes an unlimited amount of timber of one species from which may be taken the finest of building logs, why not restrict all building to log and native stone? This would insure the permanency of harmony.” (Laurent, p30) Based on the plan residences were to be constructed of logs with a stone foundation and an outside chimney made of local stone. Most importantly the residence should be rustic in nature. Beginning in 1933 the Schunks added onto the original cabin and added other buildings to the site. In making these additions they were careful in keeping to the rustic aesthetic and using native logs and stone as specified in the forest recreation plan.

While the rustic aesthetic of the Schunk Lodge is typical of recreation residences from its period, the overall development of the complex is quite unusual. Generally speaking, recreation residences usually consist of a cabin and one or two outbuildings. The addition of the ice house, fire house, and power house in the 1940s sets this property apart from other recreation residences. Locating a sawmill at the site allowed the Schunks to more easily construct buildings on the site. The addition of the powerhouse is a particularly unusual aspect of the Schunk Lodge, and is almost certainly unique amongst recreation residences in the Bighorn National Forest.

The Schunk Lodge retains a high level of its historic integrity. It is in its historic location and the setting in a wooded area is intact. The integrity of the materials, design, and workmanship are all very high. While a building was removed from the site in the 1980s, the feeling of the site as a large and notable recreation residence and its association with the Schunk family and local conservation efforts clearly remains.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

8 each of the 500 page record volumes (14 1/4" x 9 1/8") that have recorded guests to Schunk Lodge to present.

Adkins, Dr. A.E. Letter to the Schunk Family dated 1933.

Bonney, Lorraine G. and Orrin H. *Field Book The Bighorn Range including Geology & Cloud Peak Wilderness*. Chicago: The Swallow Press, Inc., 1977.

Bonney, Lorraine G. and Orrin H. *Guide to the Wyoming Mountains and Wilderness Areas, Climbing Routes & Back Country*, 3rd ed. Chicago: The Swallow Press, Inc. 1977.

Boyer, David S. "Wyoming High, Wide, and Windy", *National Geographic*, Volume 129, Number 4. April, 1966. Pages 554-568.



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"Climbing Cloud Peak Offers Challenges, Rewards", *Casper Star-Tribune*, July 24, 2014.

Connor, James F. *History of The Bighorn National Forest and the Vicinity*. 1940 manuscript from the files of the Media Room at Fulmer Library, Sheridan, Wyoming

Harvey, Mark. *Wilderness Forever, Howard Zahniser And The Path To The Wilderness Act*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005.

Laurent, Ricky. "2012 Revision: 1997 Historic Context on recreational Summer Homes, Bighorn National Forest, Big Horn, Johnson, Sheridan, and Washakie Counties". Prepared for Bighorn National Forest, Sheridan, Wyoming. June 25, 2012.

Slack, Judy and the Bozeman Trail Museum. *Big Horn City*. Images of America, Arcadia Publishing, 2011.

Zahniser, Howard. "Cloud Peak's Primitive Area and People," *The Living Wilderness*, Autumn, 1947, 7-16.

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):N/A**

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)  
☐ previously listed in the National Register  
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register  
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark  
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

☐ State Historic Preservation Office  
☐ Other State agency  
☒ Federal agency - Forest Service  
☐ Local government  
☐ University  
☐ Other  
Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): 48SH1346

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 0.95 acres

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 13 324460 4942365  
Zone Easting Northing

2 \_\_\_\_\_  
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Zone Easting Northing

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**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

One mile north of the Big Goose Ranger Station (17.4 miles from Big Horn, Wyoming), off Red Grade Road #26, FS road #296 to FS road #301. The cabin is located on the NW end of a very large grassland with East Fork of Big Goose Creek approximately ¼ to ½ mile to the east. Ranger Creek runs through dense forest to the west or behind the property. Please refer to the attached map showing the legal boundary of the property.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The nominated boundaries were laid out to enclose the irregular placement of the buildings. The buildings were laid out and built before the Forest Service has guideline mandating the number of buildings and placement on a site.

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Kathleen Ahrens and Lori Harter (granddaughters of Will and Edna Schunk), Pat Bowers, Archaeologist  
(USFS)

organization \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

street & number 628 Mountain Shadows Blvd. telephone 307-763-4501

city or town Sheridan state WY zip code 82801

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

**Photographs:**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Schunk Lodge  
City or Vicinity: Big Horn vicinity  
County: Sheridan  
Photographer: Kathy Ahrens

State: WY

Date Photographed: September 18, 2016

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Description of Photograph(s) and number:

Schunk Lodge Main Cabin east elevation  
1 of 12.

Schunk Lodge Main Cabin northwest corner  
2 of 12.

Schunk Lodge Main Cabin west elevation  
3 of 12.

Schunk Lodge Main Cabin south elevation  
4 of 12.

Schunk Lodge, Ice House east façade  
5 of 12.

Schunk Lodge, Finn House north façade  
6 of 12.

Schunk Lodge, Power House southeast corner. Water wheel on south side.  
7 of 12.

Schunk Lodge, Power House south west corner  
8 of 12.

Schunk Lodge, Power House north elevation  
9 of 12.

Schunk Lodge, Bunkhouse southeast corner  
10 of 12.

Schunk Lodge, Saddle Barn south façade  
11 of 12.

Schunk Lodge, Saddle Barn southwest corner  
12 of 12.

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**Property Owner:**

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name \_\_\_\_\_

street & number \_\_\_\_\_

telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_

state \_\_\_\_\_

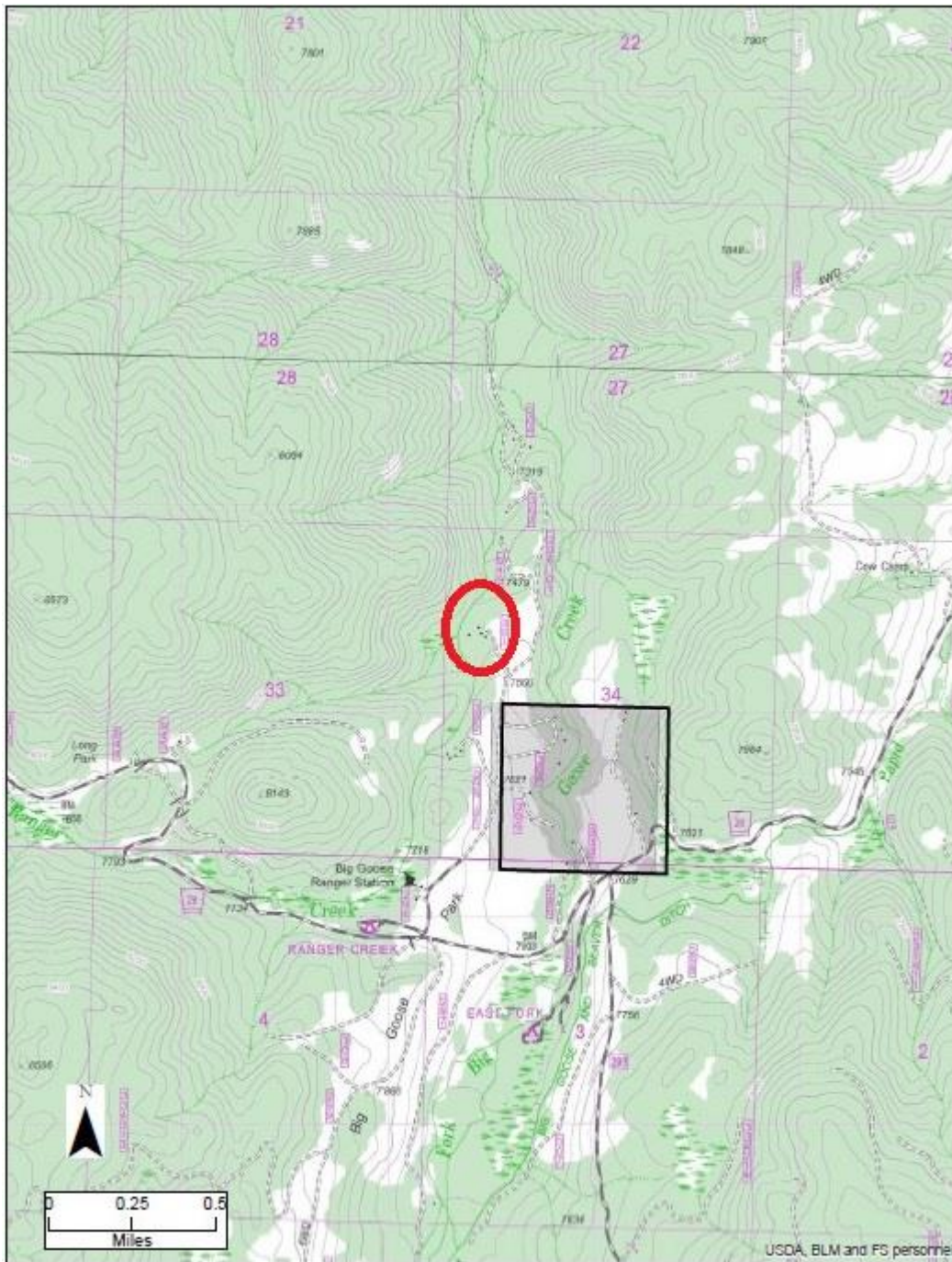
zip code \_\_\_\_\_

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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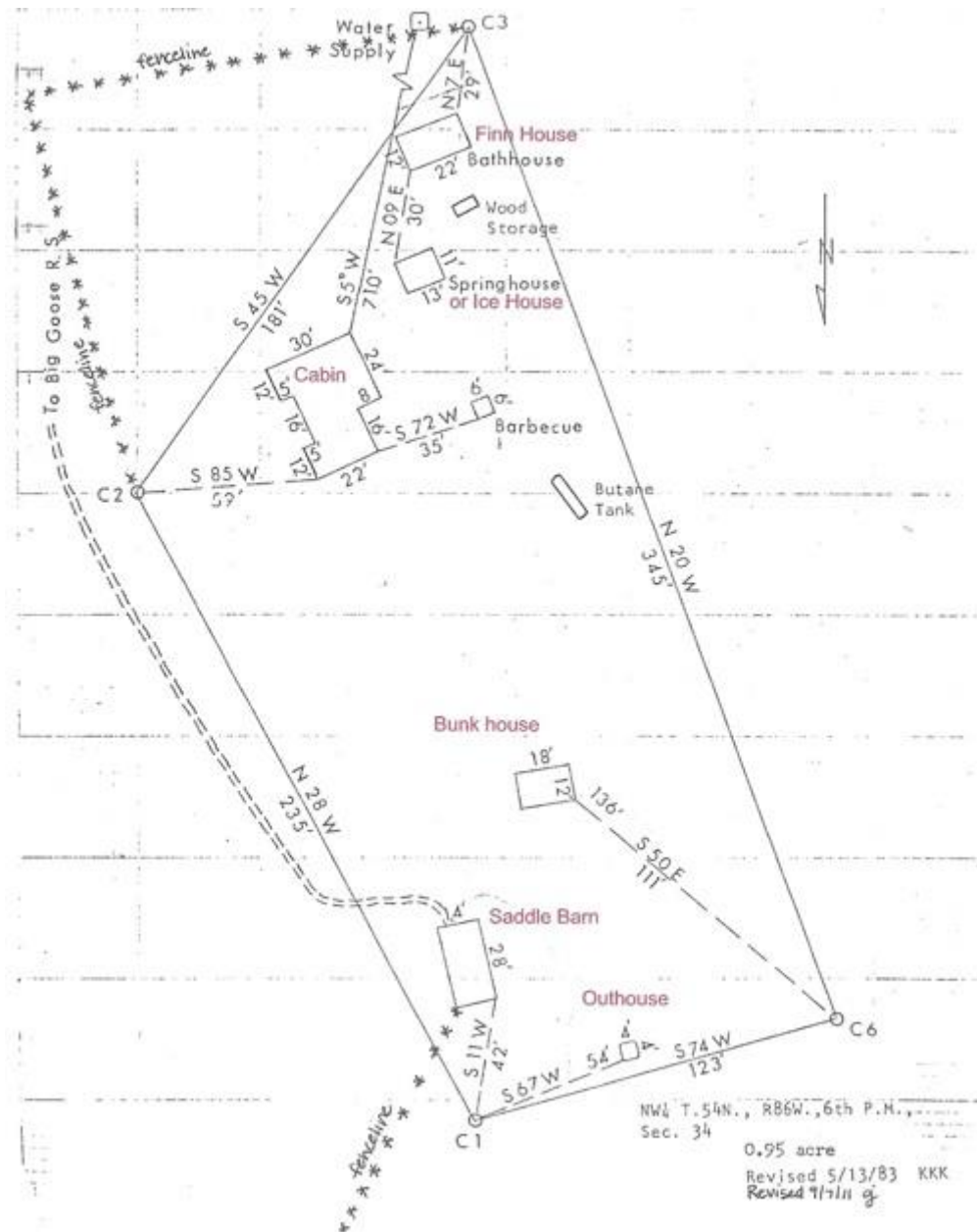
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Topographic map showing location of Schunk Lodge in red circle.

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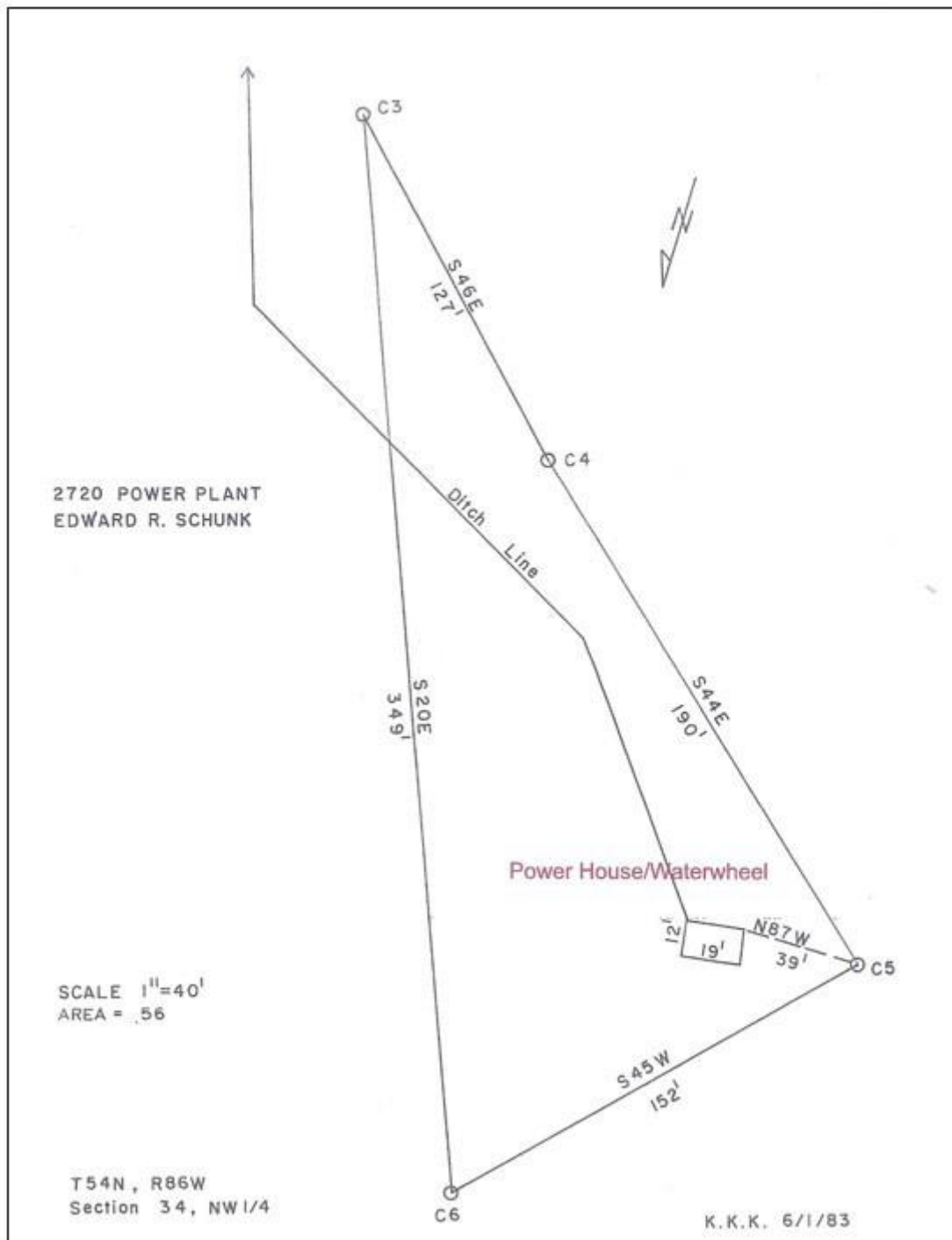
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Site plan (1 of 2) of Schunk Lodge showing legal boundary.

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Site plan (2 of 2) of Schunk Lodge showing legal boundary.

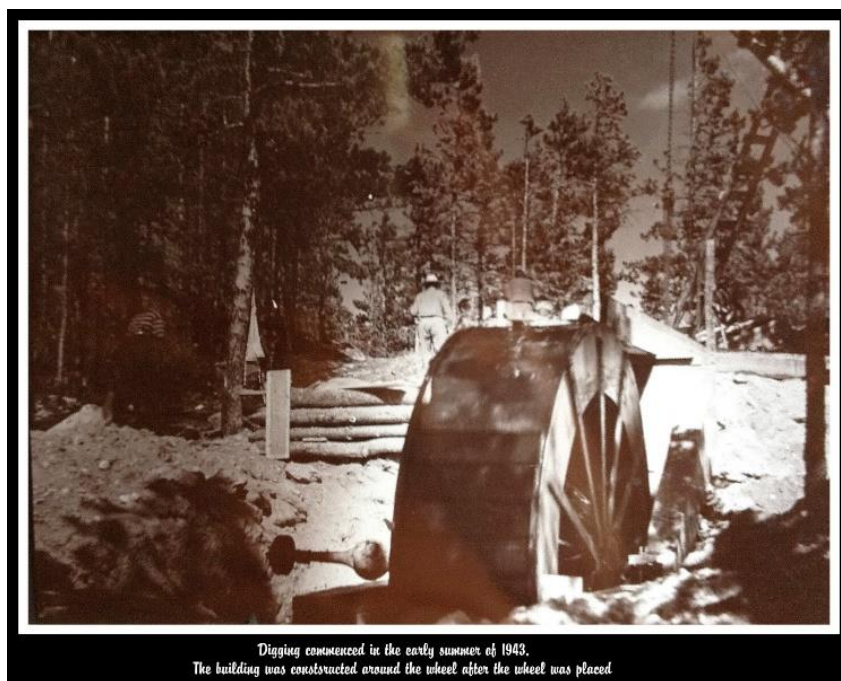


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Photograph from 1939 showing construction of the Ice House.



Photograph from 1943 showing construction of Powerhouse.



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30 July 1947 - Having such an experience as that of this 1947 Schunks Trip into the Cloud Peaks Primitive Area makes one feel grand and humble both. It was altogether good. It was a rare privilege to live for a time in such an environment and with such a group of people. To me the companionship with each and every one in the group was a very rich association. I now cherish even more than ever the privilege we Americans have of preserving such areas, and I envy for many more people the opportunity of experiencing such a richness as I have known. I trust that I can handle well this investment that the Schunks have made in me and in what I represent. Personally I have a gratitude that I can hardly express, for the kindness not only to me but to Walthais too. As Bob with his technical vocabulary would say "5¢ and 5¢ - 10¢!"

Howard Zahniser

30-7-47

Entry from Howard Zahniser in the Schunk Lodge guest book.