

M.T. & JENNIE H. DEATON PROPERTY
Caribou-Targhee National Forest, Big Springs Summer Home Area
Lot 2, Block N
Island Park
Fremont County
Idaho

HABS No. ID-126

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
COLUMBIA CASCADES SUPPORT OFFICE
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
909 First Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104-1060

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

M.T. & JENNIE H. DEATON PROPERTY HABS No. ID-126

Location: Lot 2, Block N, Caribou-Targhee National Forest, Big Springs Summer Home Area, Island Park, Fremont County, Idaho

The existing Big Springs Summer Home Area is located in the Island Park Management Area (MA#8), approximately 3 miles east of the community of Mack's Inn, Idaho. Access to the cabins is east from Highway 20 onto the South Big Springs Road #59 at Mack's Inn. Follow this road approximately 4.5 miles, turn northeast onto Big Springs Summer Home Road #61. The summer home area can be accessed from this general location. The Deaton Property is located on Lot 2, Block N.

Present Owner: Jennie H. Deaton

Present Use: Summer home

Significance: As an historic district, the integrity of Big Springs Summer Home Area has been lost. However, the summer home exhibits local significance due to its association with the original development of the area. The summer home was part of the original development of the Big Springs Summer Home Area begun in 1911 with the construction of the Forest Service Ranger station. The summer home also embodies the characteristics of the vernacular architecture typical of the region and time period that it was built.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date(s) of erection: Unknown
2. Architect: Unknown
3. Original and Subsequent Owners: It is believed that Arthur and Francis Peterson were the original owners of the cabin. This is based on a copy of a letter to the Forest Supervisor, on file with the U.S. Forest Service, Island Park, stating the transfer of the use permit from Arthur and Francis Peterson to M. T. and Jennie H. Deaton, dated October 13, 1955.

Mrs. Deaton continues to hold the special use permit for this property.

4. Builders, Contractors, Suppliers: Unknown
5. Original Plans and Construction: It is not known exactly what constituted the original cabin footprint. Based on the construction technique and use of materials it would suggest that the original cabin footprint was located on the north end of the building. The original cabin was L-shaped in plan with the main living room, oriented in a predominately north-south direction, and a small bedroom perpendicular to the main room at the northwest corner. A stone chimney was centered on the south gable end wall of the main room. A covered porch extending the length of the original cabin was located on the north side facing the river. The foundation was constructed with log beams and joists on concrete piers. The walls of the original cabin were constructed with 8" diameter (on average) logs saddle notched at the corners. The cabin has a medium pitched hipped roof.
6. Alterations and Additions: Again, based on construction techniques and materials, an addition was constructed on the south side of the original cabin extending the living space behind the fireplace. The walls on either side of the fireplace were opened to allow for circulation between the two areas. The foundation of the addition was constructed with log beams and joists on concrete piers. The walls were constructed with 8" diameter (on average) logs saddle notched at the corners. The log coursing of the addition abuts the saddle-notched corners of the original cabin. The roof of the addition is a continuation of the medium pitched roof extending from the original cabin. This addition was more than likely a kitchen, evident in the brick chimney with flue opening located on the west side of the room. (For ease of discussion this addition will be referred to as the entry room throughout the rest of this report.)

Prior to the purchase of the cabin by the Deatons in 1955, the building was enlarged once again.¹ A large bedroom had been added on the south side of the entry room and a kitchen with utility area was located on the west side of the entry room. The bedroom contained a full bathroom with bathtub, toilet, and sink. These two rooms were constructed with concrete foundations, wood framed walls with log siding, and a gable roof.

In the late 1950s, the Deatons remodeled the cabin and moved the kitchen from its location west of the entry room up to the northwest corner bedroom. The kitchen area then was remodeled into a bedroom with a bathroom and a utility area. The front porch, on the north side of the cabin, was also enclosed with full-height fixed pane windows thereby enlarging the existing living room.

In 1956, the guest cabin was renovated by combining two smaller buildings already on the property. A small single room building was moved approximately 20' and joined to the existing guest cabin. A bathroom was installed between the two buildings forming the current two-bedroom guest cabin.

- B. Historical Context: A U.S. Forest Service Ranger Station was the original development in the Big Springs area. It was located on the south bank of the river below the springs and consisted of a residence, an office, and a storehouse, plus a pasture and warehouse south of the road. In the beginning, summer homes were permitted as neighbors to this early Ranger Station. The first permits were issued in 1911 with the last permit issued in 1938. The original 37 summer homes were scattered in a U-shaped area around the head of the spring and along both sides of the stream. Many of the permits have since been transferred with U.S. Forest Service approval to new owners and, in some cases through a succession of owners.²

In 1949, the U.S. Forest Service gave notice to the summer home owners that the riverfront property in the Big Springs area was needed for public recreation.³ By 1965, the 37 original lots were reduced to 28 under special-use permit. The U.S. Forest Service removed the Ranger Station buildings and the site and former lots have regrown to the natural forest environment.⁴

¹ Telephone interview with Mrs. Jennie Deaton by author, September 19, 2001.

² "Decision on Appeal of Big Springs Summer Home Owners to the Chief of the Forest Service from a Decision of the Regional Forester, Region 4, August 1965". (On file with the USDA Forest Service, Island Park Ranger Station, ID.)

³ "Big Springs Summer Homes – Targhee National Forest", January 1983. (On file with the USDA Forest Service, Island Park Ranger Station, ID.)

⁴ "Decision on Appeal of Big Springs Summer Home Owners to the Chief of the Forest Service". (On file with the USDA Forest Service, Island Park Ranger Station, ID.)

By 1982, 22 summer homes remained within the Big Springs Summer Home area. Today only four remain in their current location – Call Cabin, Deaton Cabin, Marriott Cabin, and Neilson Cabin. The other 18 properties have been moved to set-back lots within the Big Springs Summer Home area, relocated to other summer home areas within the national forest, or have been removed from U.S. Forest Service lands altogether. The remaining four properties are to be removed by 2002.

In the early 1980's, this river segment became the nation's first National Recreation Water Trail.

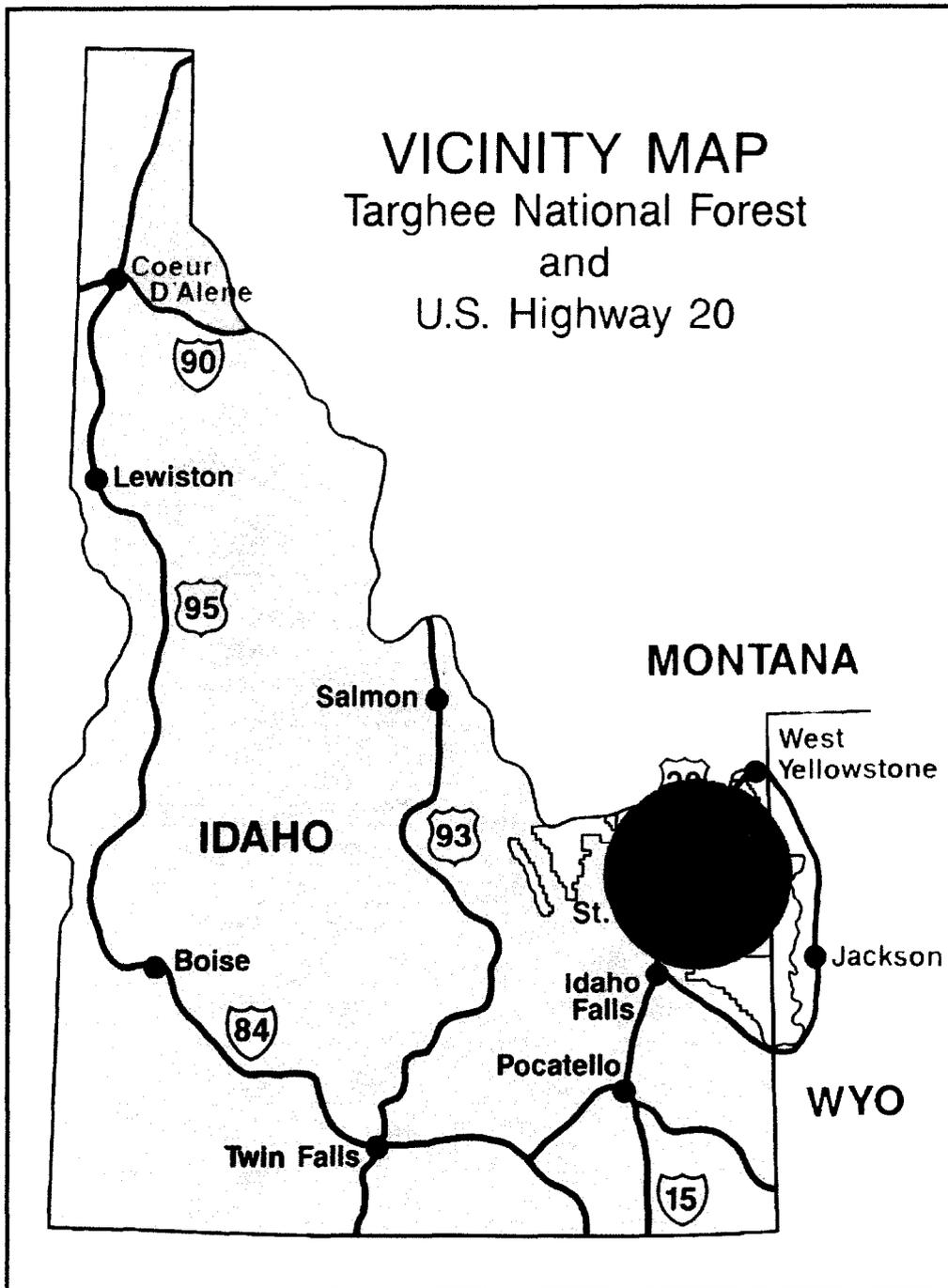


Figure 1: Vicinity map showing project area⁵

⁵ "Targhee National Forest Lodgepole Pine Reforestation Program", Targhee National Forest, Department of Agriculture, US Government Printing Office, 24.07.415.09/88.

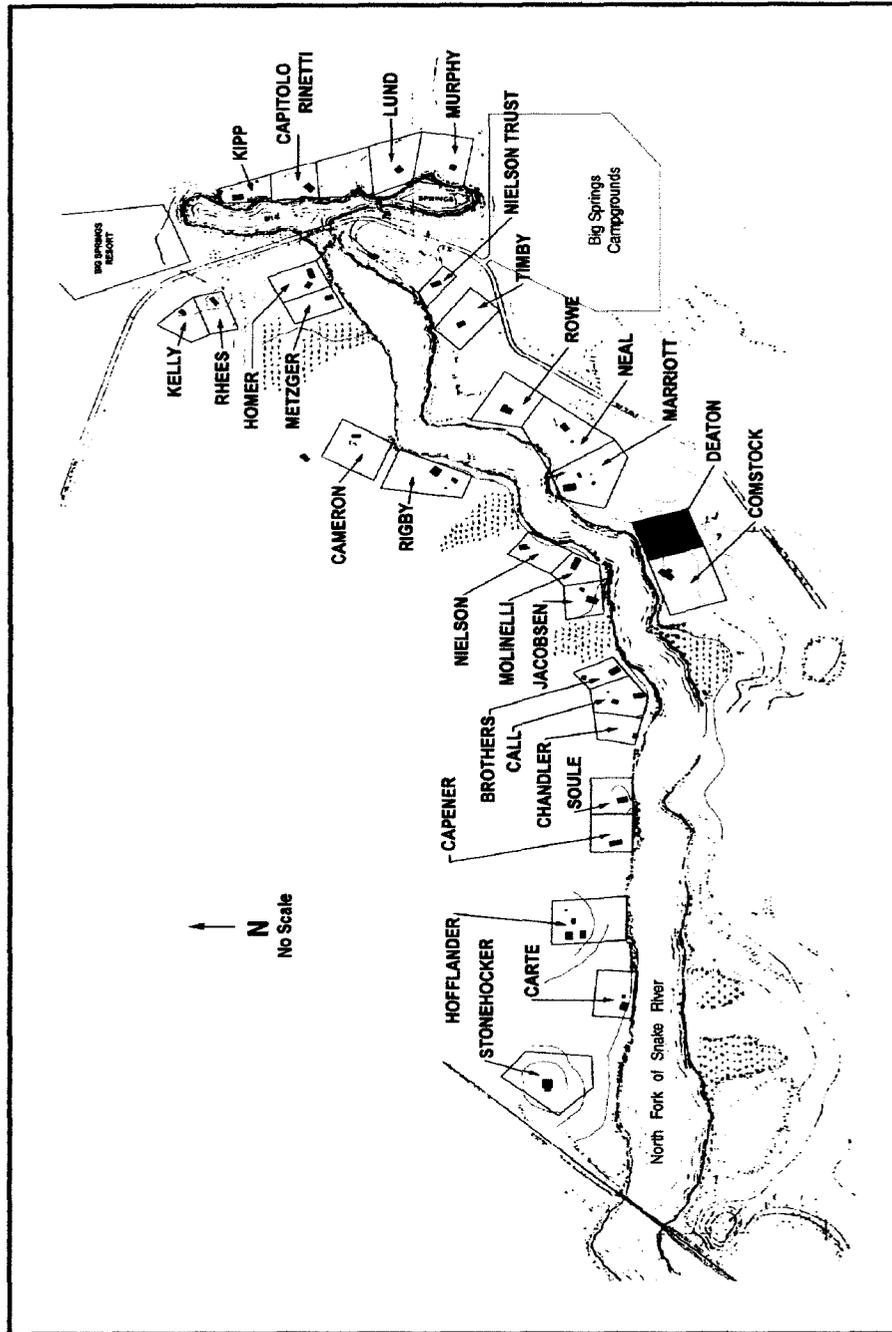


Figure 2: Location map of M.T. and Jennie H. Deaton property⁶

⁶ Modified from Big Springs Summer Home Area location map, Targhee National Forest, Island Park District, US Forest Service, Department of Agriculture, date unknown.

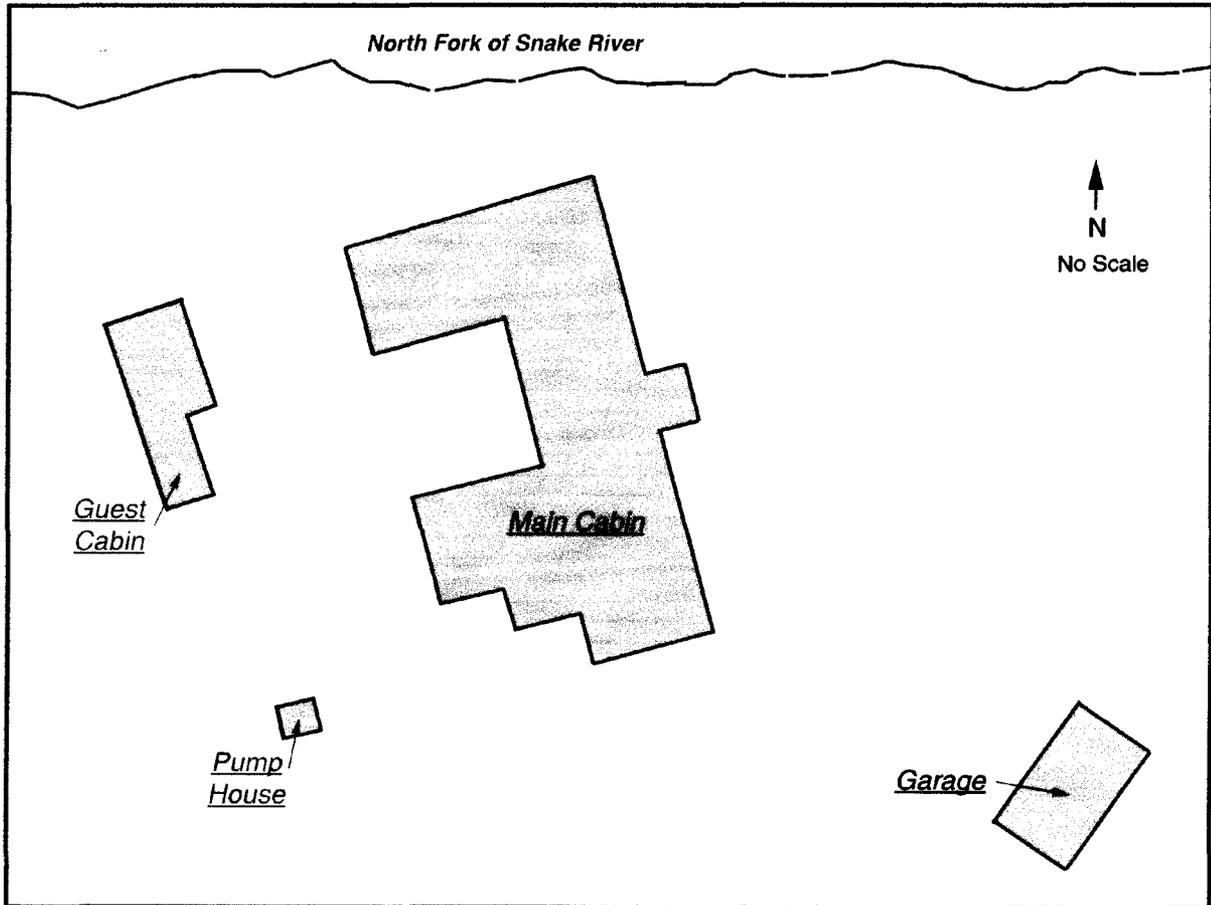


Figure 3: Sketch map of M.T. and Jennie H. Deaton Property

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The building was constructed in a log cabin style. The style is evident in the building's massing, original single pen floor plan, construction technique, and building materials.
2. Condition of fabric: The exterior of the building is in good condition. The interior, in spite of being modified and updated over the years, retains much of its original finish and character.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall Dimensions:
2. Foundations: The foundation of the original cabin consists of log beams and joists supported by concrete piers. The foundations for the additions were constructed with wood joists supported by concrete piers.
3. Walls: The exterior walls of the original cabin and the entry room addition were constructed with 8" diameter (on average) pine logs saddle notched at the corners. The two bedroom additions are 2" x 4" wood studs with 2" x 8" log siding with mitered corners.
4. Structural System, Framing: The structure of the original cabin and entry room addition consists of log beams and joists supported by a concrete pier foundation. Log rafters, purlins, a ridge log, and cap logs support the roof. The interior 6" diameter cross beams in the living room and entry room are located at 6'-3" above the finished floor. The bedroom additions are framed with 2" x 4" wood studs on a concrete foundation. Rafters support the gable roofs.
5. Porches, Stoops, Balconies, Bulkheads: A full-width porch was once located on the north side of the cabin facing the river. This porch has been enclosed and incorporated into the living space of the cabin. The front entrance to the cabin is now located on the east side and enters into the entry room. The porch has a medium pitched gable roof with exposed 3" diameter log rafters, cross bracing, 1" x 12" decking, and split shake shingles. The porch floor is a poured concrete slab raised approximately 4" above grade. Located on the south side of the porch and knocked into the log joist are several wooden pegs for hanging various outdoor articles.

A concrete stoop is located outside the kitchen door on the west side. The "back" door also has a concrete stoop with two steps.

6. Chimneys: The cabin has a single stone fireplace and chimney constructed on the south gable end wall of the original cabin. Several of the top courses of the chimney have been damaged and have subsequently been removed. A single flue extends up from the center of the chimney.

On the interior of the cabin, the fireplace measures 6'-6" wide, 5'-8" deep with shoulders at 6'-0" above the finished floor. The mantel is located 5'-2" above the finished floor and the stone stops approximately 1'-6" above the mantel. Horizontal logs finish the gable wall.

A second chimney, constructed of red brick, is located on the west wall of the entry room. The bottom of the chimney is located 4'-2½" above the finished floor and measures 1'-6" wide by 8½" deep. Two angled pine logs and ¾" planking support the bottom of the chimney. The opening of the flue remains and is covered with a decorative brass plate.

7. Openings:
- a. Doorways and Doors: Vertical pine plank doors with decorative black-strap hinges. Exterior screen doors on front, rear and kitchen doors.
- b. Windows and Shutters: Several window styles have been used in the construction of the house. Full-height fixed glass windows (7'-7" wide by 5'-5" tall) line the north wall of the enclosed porch and kitchen. The east wall of the enclosed porch also has a fixed glass window measuring 5'-5" wide by 3'-3½" tall. The entry room has a fixed glass wood frame window, measuring 5'-5" x 3'-3½", on the east wall. In addition to the full-height fixed glass windows in the kitchen, a 3'-3" x 2'-9" sliding wood frame window is located over the sink.

The south bedroom has two types of windows. The south wall contains a double-hung wood frame window measuring 2'-4" x 4'-6" and, the east wall has a 5' x 3' fixed glass wood frame window. The bathroom contains a 2' x 3' hopper window with screen above the toilet. The west bedroom has pairs of windows that swing into the room. Each unit of each pair measures 2' x 2'-11" and are located on both the west and south walls of the room.

8. Roof:
- a. Shape, Covering: The roof is hipped with 3" diameter exposed rafters, decking and asphalt shingles over the original split shake shingles. The south bedroom has a medium pitched gable roof with asphalt shingles.

b. Cornice, Eaves: The original cabin, porch, kitchen area, and entry room all have 3” diameter exposed log rafter ends. The bedroom additions were constructed with exposed 2” x 6” rafter ends.

c. Dormers, Cupolas, Towers: None.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor Plans:

a. Describe Floors: The one-story building is irregular in plan with the primary entrance on the east side. The original cabin area was of a single pen design with a full-width porch on the north side and a stone fireplace centered on the south wall. The building was enlarged with a smaller rectangular room, now a entry room, added to the south side of the original cabin. The walls on either side of the fireplace were opened to allow circulation between the two rooms. The kitchen is located at the northwest corner of the original cabin. Two more additions were added to the building. A bedroom and bathroom were added on the south side of the entry room and a second bedroom/bathroom (a kitchen at one time) and utility area were constructed on the west side of the entry room. The utility area has a wood and glass door as does the kitchen area.

2. Stairways: There is a single step down on the west side from the entry room into the utility hall. There are no other stairs or steps inside the house.

3. Flooring: Carpet covers the original wood plank flooring in the living room and entry room. The kitchen and utility area have new 12” vinyl tile while both bathroom floors have sheet vinyl. The two bedrooms have wall-to-wall carpet.

4. Wall Finishes: Varnished horizontal logs, with fiberboard covering the chinking, are in the living room and entry room. The kitchen, bedrooms, bathrooms, and utility area have been finished with vertical knotty pine tongue and groove boards.

5. Ceiling Finishes: The vaulted ceilings in the living room, entry room, kitchen, and enclosed porch have exposed log rafters, beams, ridge logs, and pine board decking. The ceilings in the entry room, kitchen and enclosed porch have been chamfered at the perimeter. The remaining ceilings in the house are knotty pine tongue and groove boards.

6. Openings:

a. Doorways and Doors: Several of the doors in the building were constructed with vertical pine boards. The openings between rooms are framed and trimmed with pine. Openings flank both sides of the fireplace allowing circulation between the living room and entry room. The exterior wall between

the original cabin area (now the living room) and the porch has been removed and the opening framed with pine. The kitchen has an exterior sliding screen door.

b. Windows: No interior windows

7. Decorative Features and Trim: The exposed log walls, purlins, ridge beam, cross beams, and knotty pine boards are significant to the interior character of the house. The living room has a stone fireplace with bark-trimmed mantel. The wood floors have been covered throughout the house.

8. Hardware: The front wood plank door has black strap decorative hinges, door handle, and door knocker. A decorative letter "D" is centered on the front door.

9. Mechanical equipment:

a. Heating, air conditioning, ventilation: Individual Bryant room heaters are located in the bedrooms and bathrooms. The fireplace provides heating for the main part of the building. The building does not have air conditioning and numerous windows provide ventilation.

b. Lighting: Incandescent lighting is used throughout the house. The living room fixture consists of two colonial type lights suspended from a twisted pine branch suspended from a cross beam. The entry room light fixture consists of three incandescent bulbs with a harness incorporated into the design. The remaining lights throughout the house are a combination of ceiling mounted and wall mounted incandescent fixtures and table lamps.

c. Plumbing: Originally, the bathroom was an outhouse on the property. By 1962, a bathroom was installed in the house and the pit toilet/outhouse removed. The cabin now contains two full bathrooms and a kitchen with running water supplied by the pump house.

10. Original Furnishings: None

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The cabin is located in the Big Springs Summer Home Area on the north side of the North Fork of the Snake River. The original cabin was oriented in the east west direction.

The Big Springs Summer Home Area derives its name from a large spring that is the major source of water for the North Fork of the Snake River. The spring flows at a rate in excess of 160 feet per second from under a hill and gives rise to a stream about 100 feet wide with depths up to four feet. The spring is recognized

as a unique geological feature in the state of Idaho. The original 37 summer homes were scattered in a U-shaped area around the head of the spring and along both sides of the stream. By 1965, 28 summer homes remained in the area.

The topography of the Big Springs Summer Home Area is generally level to gently sloping along the river banks. The area is heavily timbered with lodgepole pine, with an understory of shrubs, pinegrass and ground huckleberry and other wildflower plants. Marshy spots are interspersed with dry sites along the river. The stream itself supports a growth of green aquatic vegetation.

2. Historic Landscape Design: None

3. Outbuildings:

Guest Cabin: The guest cabin is located adjacent and to the west of the main cabin. The building, as it exists today, is divided into two bedrooms separated by a central bath. Prior to 1955, the guest cabin consisted of two smaller separate buildings located on the property. The present day “north” cabin was a single room log structure with a covered porch and measured 14’ wide by 19’ long. The present day “south” cabin was a single room structure located approximately 20’ away from it’s current location. The “south” cabin measured 9’-6” wide by 11’ long and was constructed with rough lumber. In 1956, Mr. Deaton submitted plans for the two buildings to be connected and separated by a 6’ wide central bathroom.⁷

The “north” cabin measures approximately 14’ wide by 19’ long including the covered porch. The foundation of the “north” room consists of log beams and joists supported by concrete piers. The walls were constructed with 8” diameter (on average) horizontal pine logs saddle notched at the corners. The north end of the building has a jerkin-head roof and was constructed with exposed log rafters, purlins and beams with pine decking covered with split shake shingles. Vertical tongue and groove pine boards frame in the gable area. Removable fixed glass windows line the north wall of the now enclosed porch. A flush panel wood door and exterior screen door provide access into the room. The walls and ceiling of the “north” room were finished knotty pine tongue and groove boards. The ceiling was chamfered and the log purlins and cross beams were left exposed. Carpet covers the floor. A single Pioneer wall heater provides heat for the room.

The wood frame “south” cabin was constructed with 2” x 4” studs on a concrete foundation with a medium pitched gable roof constructed with 2” x 4” rafters with exposed ends and split shake shingles. The exterior walls are sheathed with 2” x 8” log

⁷ Drawing produced by Mel Harris and submitted by Mr. Deaton, October 15, 1956. (On file with the USDA Forest Service, Island Park Ranger Station, ID.)

siding with mitered corners. On the interior, the walls and ceiling was finished with knotty pine tongue and groove boards. The ceiling was chamfered at the east and west walls. A flush panel wood door and screen provide access from the south. Carpet covers the floor. A single four-lite wood window is on the east wall.

The bathroom is located between the “north” cabin and the “south” cabin and measures approximately 8’-6” by 6’. The central bath, accessible from both the “north” and “south” cabins, contains a toilet, sink and shower stall. A hopper window, on the east wall, provides ventilation. The walls and ceiling of the bathroom were finished knotty pine tongue and groove boards.

Garage: A two car garage, measuring 14’ x 24’, is located south of the main cabin. The one-story structure was constructed with a poured concrete slab foundation, 2” x 4” studs walls sheathed with 2” x 8” log siding. The medium pitched gable roof has asphalt shingles and exposed rafter ends. A single panel lift-up garage door measuring 8’-9” x 6’-10” is located on the east side of the building. Centered on the west wall is a single 6-lite sliding wood frame window.

Pumphouse / Storage: This small one-story building is located south of the main house and west of the garage. The building was constructed with a concrete slab foundation, 2x4 wood framed walls with 2” x 8” log siding, a medium pitched gable roof with exposed rafter ends, and 1” x 8” decking covered with shake shingles. A single pine plank door is located on the east side. The interior footprint of the building measures 6’-3” x 5’-4”. A single 6-lite wood window, measuring 2’-3” x 1’-11”, is located on the south wall.

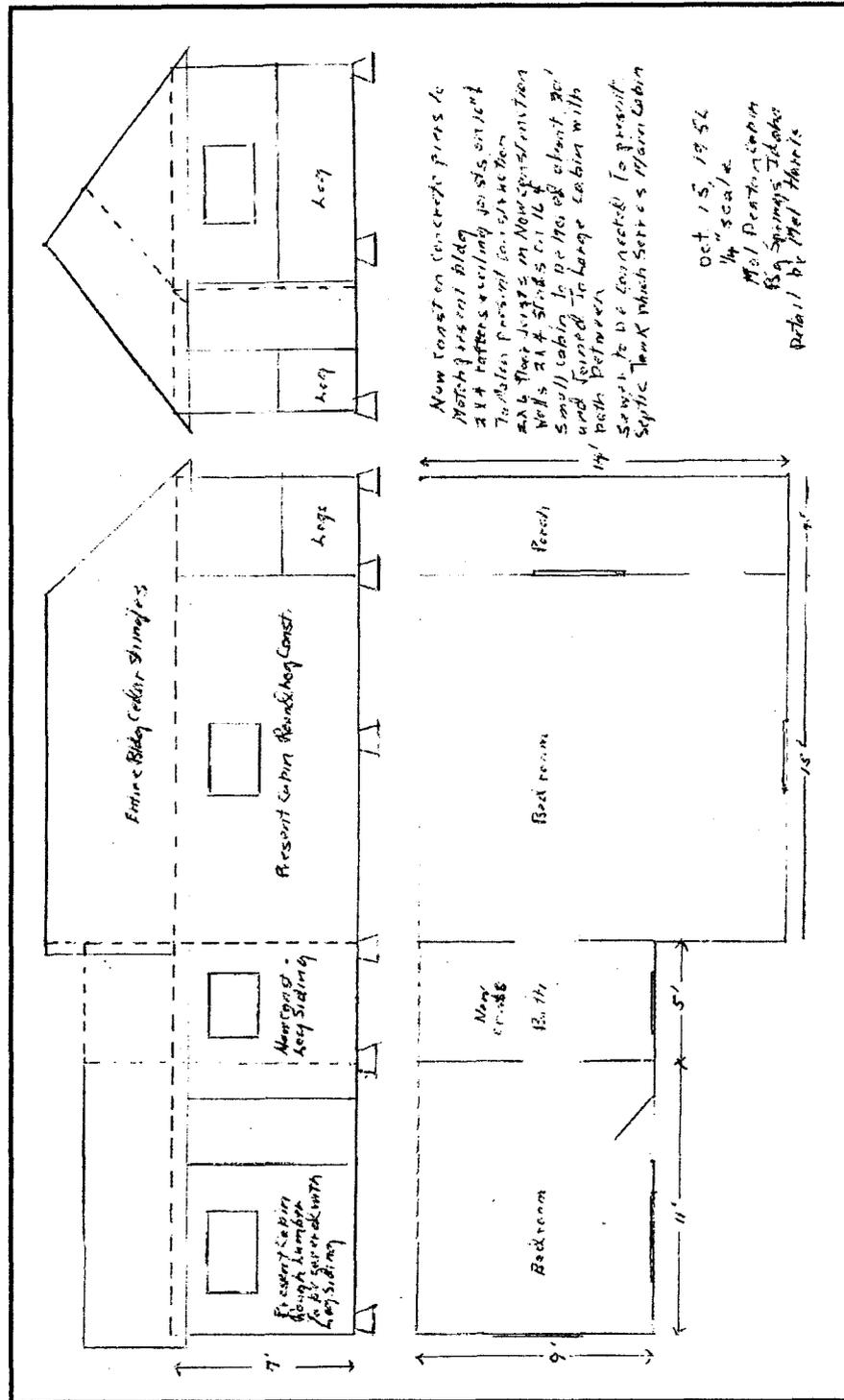


Figure 4: Drawing of renovated Guest House by Mel Harris, October 15, 1956.⁸

⁸ Ibid.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. Original Architectural Drawings: None
- B. Early Views: None
- C. Interviews: Interview with Mrs. Christie Tonsfeldt, July 7, 2001. Telephone interview with Mrs. Jennie H. Deaton, September 19, 2001.
- D. Bibliography:
1. Primary and unpublished sources:
“Decision on Appeal of Big Springs Summer Home Owners to the Chief of the Forest Service from a Decision of the Regional Forester, Region 4, August 1965”. (On file with the USDA Forest Service, Island Park Ranger Station, ID.)

“Big Springs Summer Homes – Targhee National Forest”, January 1983. (On file with the USDA Forest Service, Island Park Ranger Station, ID.)

Letters to the Forest Supervisor. (On file with the USDA Forest Service, Island Park Ranger Station, ID.)

Special Use Fee, Bill for Collection, Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture. (On file with the USDA Forest Service, Island Park Ranger Station, ID.)

“Standard Inspection of Summer Homes on the Targhee National Forest”, Inspection Forms. (On file with the USDA Forest Service, Island Park Ranger Station, ID.)
 2. Secondary and published sources: None
- E. Supplemental Material: None

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION:

The project was sponsored by the USDA Forest Service. Documentation was coordinated through Mr. Ali Abusaidi, Archeologist, Caribou-Targhee National Forest, Idaho Falls, Idaho, and Ms. Kaye Olpin, Recreation Forester, Caribou-Targhee National Forest, Island Park Ranger Station, Island Park, Idaho. The project was completed through the U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, Midwest Archaeological Center, Lincoln, Nebraska. Ms. Sheila McCarthy served as project architect. Mr. Martin Stupich produced the large-format photographs included in the report.