

THE HORSE RANCH, POND SYSTEM
Wallowa-Whitman National Forest
Eagle Cap Wilderness Area
Joseph vicinity
Wallowa County
Oregon

HABS No. OR-165-AH

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
Columbia Cascades Support Office
National Park Service
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
THE HORSE RANCH (Red's Horse Ranch), Pond System

HABS No. OR-165-AH

Location: The Horse Ranch is located within the Eagle Cap Wilderness Area, Wallowa-Whitman National Forest. The ranch lies in a valley along the Wild and Scenic Minam River in Wallowa County. It is approximately nine air miles northeast of Cove, Oregon and thirteen air miles southwest of Enterprise, Oregon. SE 1/4 of the NE 1/4 and the NE 1/4 of the SE 1/4 of Section 36, Township 2S, Range 41E, Willamette Meridian. The pond system is located to the east of the airstrip just south of the river.

Significance: The ponds are a result of the excavation undertaken for the airstrip and therefore are not natural to the site. The ponds, however, do not detract from the picturesque setting of the ranch and represent the expansion efforts undertaken by Red Higgins.

According to the Determination of Eligibility for the National Register (letter dated, May 1, 1996) between the State Historic Preservation Office and the U.S. Forest Service, the pond system is a non-contributing feature within the Horse Ranch complex.

Description: This feature consists of two interconnected ponds and a ditch system which connects to the Minam River. The ponds are roughly extend 225' E.W. and 175' N.S. and the drainage ditch is roughly 125' long. The ponds are a result of the digging done to extend the airstrip in 1947-48.

Historical Context:

The ponds are a result of the excavation undertaken for the construction of the airstrip in 1947-48. At one time, fish were added in an attempt to create a fishing pond. The fishing pond was not successful because too much algae robbed the ponds of oxygen, killing the fish.

Sources: Cason, Richard, 8/12/96, Elgin, Oregon, former wrangler and pilot for Red's Horse Ranch, interviewed by Kimberly Lakin. Womack, Bruce, 8/96 and 10/96, Enterprise, Oregon, Eagle Cap Wilderness Area, Wallowa-Whitman National Forest, National Register Determination of Eligibility. Site analysis by Kimberly Lakin and Sally Donovan, August 1996.

Project Information:

In 1994, the Horse Ranch (Red's Horse Ranch) was acquired for inclusion in the National Wilderness System by the USDA Forest Service. As a result of the property acquisition, the USDA Forest Service is preparing an Environmental Analysis Report and Future Use Determination for the site. This process will enable the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest to establish management direction and priorities for the property. As part of the environmental analysis, a Determination of Eligibility report was completed in the spring of 1996.

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