
**An Historical Building Analysis Report for the Proposed Orick Mill A Demolition Project located
in Orick, Humboldt County, California**

Prepared by:

James Roscoe M.A.
Roscoe and Associates
Cultural Resources Consultants
3781 Brookwood Dr.
Bayside, CA 95524

With contributions from:

Susie Van Kirk
Historic Resource Consultant
P.O. Box 568
Bayside, CA 95524

March 2010

INTRODUCTION

This architectural assessment of the proposed demolition of the Arcata Redwood Company Orick Mill A was conducted by Roscoe and Associates, Cultural Resource Consultants, at the request of SHN. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), as part of the environmental review process, requires that project proponents implement procedures to inventory cultural resources and to assess potential impacts on these resources located within projects conducted, funded, or permitted by State Agencies, in this case Humboldt County.

On February 18 and March 18, 2010 cultural resource specialists from Roscoe and Associates visited the Mill property to investigate the planned demolition projects potential for adversely affecting significant historic resources. The project area is located on Bald Hills Road, 0.3 miles east of its intersection with US Highway 101 in the City of Orick, Humboldt County, California.

This architectural assessment was designed to satisfy environmental regulations specified in CEQA and its guidelines (Title 14 CCR 15064.5) by: (1) identifying and recording significant historic resources within the project area, (2) offering a preliminary significance evaluation of the identified historic resources (3) assessing the potential impacts to significant historic resources resulting from the implementation of proposed project activities, and (4) offering recommendations designed to protect resource integrity, if needed.

This evaluation recommends that none of the standing buildings and structures present at the Mill A site qualify under any of the criteria to be considered a significant historic resource. The buildings are not currently listed in the California Register of historic places, no important historical events occurred in the buildings, no noteworthy historical figures were associated with the buildings, the buildings' architecture is not representative of an important or unique style, nor the work of a master, and the buildings have no potential to yield information important in prehistory or history. Most of the main buildings were built in 1960 and thus they barely meet the 50 year criteria to even be considered for an evaluation.

PROJECT SUMMARY

The proposed project is to remove all buildings and structures associated with Orick Mill A and prepare the property for resale. All standing structures associated with the mill will be removed with the exception of the office and the historic barn on the property located to the north of the mill buildings. No excavations below the existing ground surface are planned at the current time.

The project area is located on Bald Hills Road, 0.3 miles east of its intersection with US Highway 101 in the City of Orick, Humboldt County, California (APN 520-012-013). The project area is located in Township 11N, Range 1E Section 34, Humboldt Base and Meridian and is shown on the 7.5' USGS Topographic Quadrangle Map, Orick, California 1966 (Figure 1).

All personnel who participated in this survey meet the professional standards described in *Archaeology and Historic Preservation: Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines*. James Roscoe, M.A., served as Principal Investigator and oversaw technical aspects of this project. James Roscoe, Donald Verwayen M.A. R.P.A., William Rich M.A. R.P.A. Melinda Salisbury, B.A., and Matthew Steele B.A. conducted the fieldwork and prepared the report. Historic information for Mill A also was provided by Susie Van Kirk.

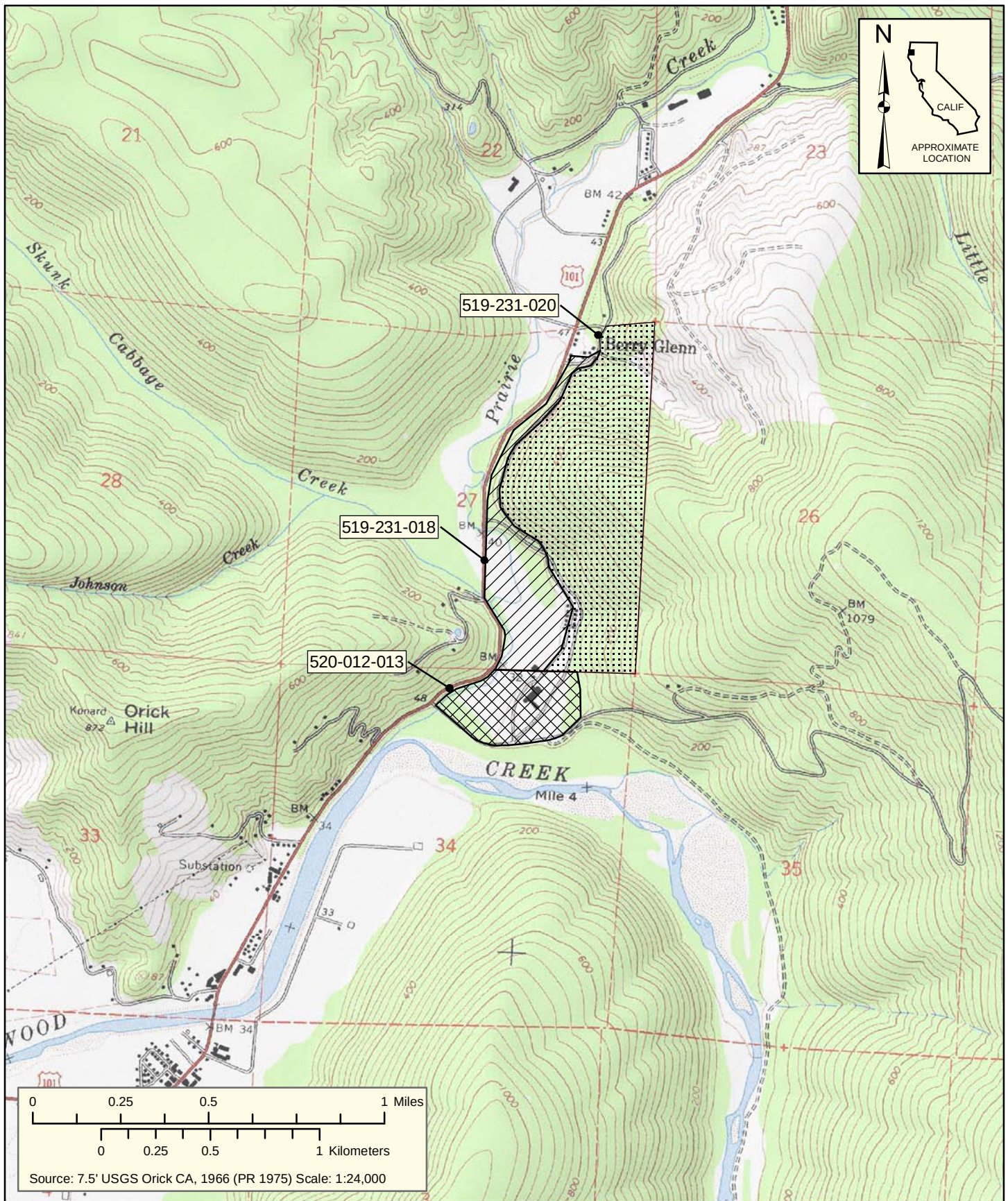


Figure 1. Project Location and Associated Assessor Parcels

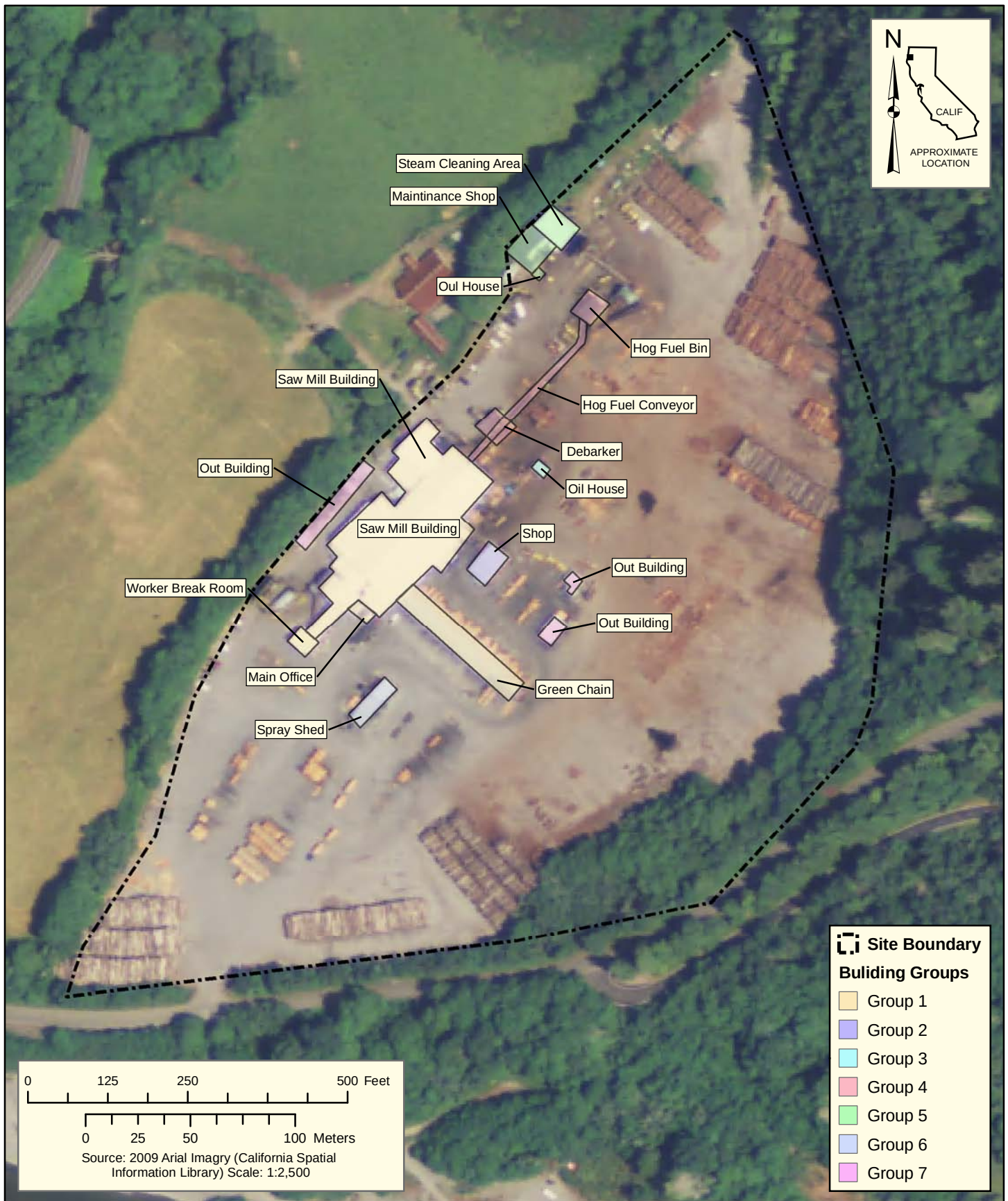


Figure 2. Orick Mill A Building Locations

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that, for projects financed or approved by public agencies, such as the Humboldt County Community Development Planning Division, the effects of the project on historical resources must be assessed. *Historical resources* are defined as buildings, sites, structures, or objects that have historical, architectural, archaeological, cultural, or scientific importance.

Under the State CEQA Guidelines, an impact is considered significant if a project will have an effect that may change the significance of the resource (Health and Safety Code Section 21084.1). Actions that would change the significance of a historical resource include demolition, replacement, substantial alteration, and relocation of historic properties. Before the level of significance of impacts can be determined and mitigation measures developed the significance of cultural resources must be determined. The 2000 CEQA Guidelines (Sec. 15064.5) define five cases in which a property can qualify as a significant historic resource for the purposes of CEQA review:

1. The resource is listed in or determined eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR). A resource may be eligible for inclusion in the CRHR if it:
 - A. is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage;
 - B. is associated with the lives of persons important in our past;
 - C. embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values; or
 - D. has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

HISTORIC PROPERTY OWNERSHIP RELATED TO MILL A

By the late 1800s, the potential wealth from redwood timber land was well known throughout the country. Speculators and investors from the eastern states and the Great Lakes areas purchased large tracts of forests in northern California as both individuals and incorporated businesses. They competed with California speculators, like those who created the first California Redwood Company of the 1880s, locating on land that was eventually headed for purchase by the Scottish syndicate. That all fell through when the Federal government investigated the fraud, but some of that land ended up in the hands of legitimate lumber companies and James D. Walker, who had traveled to Edinburgh to sign the contract with the syndicate, then began selling land on Prairie and Redwood creeks to American investors.

In 1889, William Henry Swift and Turlington Walker Harvey of Chicago and Robert S. Walker of New York City sold 55,173.30 acres to the American Lumber Co., incorporated in Illinois (Deeds 31:569). Swift was Secretary of the American Lumber Co. Those timber lands were conveyed to the grantors by James D. Walker in 1885 (Deeds 17:118, 473). Included in the 55,000 plus acres was land in the SE qt section 27 and the N half NE qt sec 34, 11N1E. In May 1902, the American Lumber Co entered into an agreement with Hammond Lumber Co., William H. Gratwick of Buffalo, New York, and Clark L. Ring of Saginaw, Michigan, whereby the American Lumber Company would sell at \$24 per acre 35,241.60 acres on Prairie and Redwood Creeks (Deeds 77:346). Hammond acquired half the interest; Gratwick 40% and Ring, 10%. The deed for this transaction is recorded in Deeds 101:335 on 15 May 1902. The purchase price was \$845,798.40.

The Humboldt *Times* commented that these tracts contained 2.5 billion feet of standing timber, considered the finest lot of trees in the entire redwood belt (Humboldt *Times* 17 May 1902). The newspaper also mentioned that David Evans had put this tract of timber together in 1884, but did not mention that Evans was one of those indicted, but never convicted, for the timberland frauds.

Clark Ring and Thomas Merrill formed the Merrill & Ring Lumber Company in Saginaw and when the white pine forests of the Great Lakes states disappeared under the woodsman's axe, they moved operations to the Pacific coast. In 1908 the Merrill & Ring Lumber Co and Wm. Gratwick sold their half of the tract to the Hill-Davis Company, also a partnership association of Michigan (Deeds 107:331). The 1922 Belcher Map identified these redwood forests as owned by "Hammond Lumber Co. ½ Hill-Davis Co. ½." In 1942, Hammond and Hill-Davis parted company (Deeds 254:404). Hill-Davis got the SE qt sec 27 and the N half NE qt sec 34, 11N1E, and, of course, much more land; Hammond, as well, got its fair share.

The Arcata Redwood Company (ARCO) was founded in 1939 by Howard A. Libbey, who had been involved first with Little River Redwood Company at Crannell and later with Hobbs, Wall Co. in Crescent City. That same year, ARCO purchased a cedar mill, owned by W.E. Wread, that had operated for a year and a half at the north end of H Street in Arcata. The ARCO mill was expected to cut 20,000 feet per day (Arcata *Union* 4 Aug. 1939). In 1946, ARCO issued 116,690 shares of stock to its sole stockholder, the Hill-Davis Company. According to Carranco (1982) there was eventually a merger of Hill-Davis timber lands and ARCO's mill operations.

In 1948, ARCO acquired 25 acres along Highway 101 between Arcata and Eureka, adjacent to the eucalyptus grove. Initially the plan was for an air-drying yard, but a modern planing mill, office, small power plant and other ancillary buildings were planned for construction over a period of two to three years (Humboldt *Times* 19 Dec. 1948). ARCO constructed its first mill in the Orick area in 1952. Located off the Davison Road (near the center of sec 22, 11N1E), it became known as Mill B and was torn down in 1974 (Arcata *Union* 8 Aug. 1974). ARCO's Mill A on the east side of Prairie Creek began operation in April 1960, when the Arcata mill was moved to the Orick location. Built to initially cut 150,000 feet per eight-hour shift, Mill A became an important employer for local residents and when the first announcement that the steady work of 22 years was threatened by a woods and mill closure in the summer of 1982, it came as a "blow" to the Orick community (Arcata *Union* 8 July 1982). In 1988, the mill was purchased by Simpson Timber Company (now California Redwood Co.), which closed it permanently in the fall of 2009.

The post WWII lumber boom transformed communities throughout northern California, and Orick was no exception. From a quiet, pastoral community of Swiss-Italian dairymen and yurok people only seasonally affected by the tourist business that followed construction of the Redwood Highway in the 1920s and 1930s, Orick exploded physically, culturally, and economically when the war ended. Woods workers, equipment operators, truckers, and mill workers from Oregon and Washington, and other parts of the country came to Orick, many with families. Truck garages and equipment repair places, logging company offices, and worker housing appeared over night. The community tried to respond, providing goods and services, entertainment (the Orick Theatre), adequate school facilities, and housing. Local Orick people took advantage of the opportunities, purchasing their own trucks to transport logs, working in the woods and mills, and offering the services and businesses an expanding community required.

There were a dozen or so mills in the Orick area, including the Harding Mill where the Redwood Creek trailhead is located off Bald Hills Road, the Geneva Mill on the highway at Lost Man Creek, the Speier and Lumberman Supply mills up Bald Hills Roads, the big Cal Pac mill on the beach where Redwood National and State Parks Visitor Center is located, ARCO Mill B on Davison Road, and several mills right in Orick. None of these mills remains; there is no physical evidence they ever existed and participated in an unprecedented period in local history—a short thirty years or so—which produced lumber for construction throughout this country and employment for thousands, and which ultimately resulted in the creation of Redwood National Park in 1968 and its expansion ten years later.

FIELD INVENTORY

The field investigation conducted on February 18 and March 18, 2010, involved documentation of the existing buildings on the Orick Mill A property with the exception of the historic barn situated to the west of the sawmill (See Figure 2). This barn and associated outbuilding will not be affected as a result of this project. An historic resources Primary Record form was completed, documenting the Mill A buildings (see Appendix A). The project area was not surveyed for any resources other than the existing buildings associated with Mill A.

RECOMMENDATIONS

None of the buildings or structures at Mill A are currently listed on the National or California Register of historic places/properties. To comply with CEQA, the lodge building was evaluated against the four eligibility criteria.

(A) Mill A is not associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

(b) Mill A is not associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

(c) Mill A does not embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or that represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

(d) Mill A has not yielded and will not be able to yield any information important in prehistory or history.

In summary, Mill A was not found to be associated with any specific significant historic events important to local, regional, or national history. No persons associated with the Mill were identified who were significant in Humboldt Counties or Orick's history. Mill A does not qualify under Criterion C, which is generally reserved for buildings with significant architectural attributes. There is nothing notable about its method of construction, nor is it the work of a master, nor does it possess high artistic value. Although no efforts were made to identify archaeological resources, no prehistoric or historic archaeological resources of significance were located during field testing. There is nothing to indicate the building has a potential to yield information that would make a lasting contribution to history.

Although this investigation was not exhaustive, it is the opinion of this author that the buildings at Mill A are not considered historic resources. Most of the main buildings were built in 1960 and thus they barely meet the 50 year criteria to even be considered for an evaluation. Therefore, no further studies are

recommended.

There is a possibility that cultural resources, including buried archaeological materials, do exist in the area and may be uncovered during future subsurface construction activities at this location. According to the North Coastal Information Center, the project location is moderately to highly sensitive for Native American cultural resources. It is assumed that some kind of development will follow the mill's demolition. Prior to that development, an archaeological survey report completed by a professional archaeologist who meets the Secretary of Interior Standards should be prepared for the areas proposed for development to document potential significant resources, potential impacts of the proposed project, and mitigation measures if needed. It is recommended that the investigation be conducted prior to future development (that involve subsurface impacts) and include oral histories with men and women who worked at the mill or the Peugh ranch place. The ranch which was bought by Hammond in 1902 has a long and rather complex history and should be documented, the historic barn to the west of the project area should be evaluated, and any historic archaeological deposits associated with it identified and recorded.

REFERENCES CONSULTED

Arcata *Union*. Published in Arcata, CA. 1886 to 1995. On microfilm at Humboldt State University Library, Arcata.

Belcher Ownership Maps of Humboldt County. Orick area. 1922.

Blue Lake *Advocate*. Published in Blue Lake, CA. 1888 to 1969. On microfilm at Humboldt State University Library, Arcata.

Carranco, Lynwood. *Redwood Lumber Industry*. Golden West Books, San Marino. 1982.

Deeds and Official Records. Humboldt County Recorder's Office, Eureka. Various dates.

Humboldt *Times*. Published first in Union (Arcata) then in Eureka, CA. 1854 to 1967, thereafter as *Times-Standard*. On microfilm at Humboldt State University Library, Arcata, CA.

Metsker Ownership Maps of Humboldt County. Orick area. 1950.

SHN Consulting Engineers and Geologists, Inc., Eureka. Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment. California Redwood Company, Orick Property. Jan. 2010.

Appendix A:

Mill A-DPR 523 Historic Resources Recordation Forms.

Primary Record

Building Structure Object Record

Sketch Map

Location Map

Continuation Sheets with Photos

PRIMARY RECORD

Primary # _____

HRI # _____

Trinomial _____

NRHP Status Code _____

Other Listings _____

Review Code _____ Reviewer _____ Date _____

Page 1 of 7

*Resource Name or #: Orick Mill A

P1. Other Identifier: _____

*P2. Location: ☒ Not for Publication ☐ Unrestricted

*a. County Humboldt

*b. USGS 7.5' Quad Orick, Ca Date 1966 T 11N; R 1E;

NW ¼ of NE ¼ of Sec 34; and S ½ of SE ¼ of Sec 34; Humboldt B.M

c. Address Bald Hills Road City Orick Zip 95555

d. UTM: Zone 10, 412,750 mE/ 4,572,842 mN (NAD83) at the center of the sawmill building.

e. Other Locational Data: Mill A is located on Bald Hills Road, at the intersection with US HWY 101. The sawmill is situated on Assessor Parcel Number 520-01-213, however associated buildings and structures are also located on the adjoining parcels to the west and north.

***P3a. Description:** The Arcata Redwood Company (ARCO) constructed this mill and began operations in 1960. ARCO was founded in 1939 by Howard A. Libbey, who had been involved with Little River Redwood Company at Crannell and later with Hobbs, Wall Co. in Crescent City. ARCO constructed its first mill in the Orick area in 1952. Located off the Davison Road (near the center of sec 22, 11N1E), it became known as Mill B and was closed in 1974 (Arcata *Union* 8 Aug. 1974). Orick Mill A began operation in April 1960, when the head rig from an Arcata cedar mill owned by ARCO was moved to the Orick location. Built to initially cut 150,000 feet per eight-hour shift, Mill A became an important employer for local residents in the Orick community. In 1988, the mill was purchased by Simpson Timber Company (now California Redwood Co.), which operated the mill until its closure in the fall of 2009. At the time of this recording the property contains the company office and employee areas, sawmill, green chain, de-barker, hog (waste bark and scrap) conveyors and overhead bins. Associated shops for working on the mill equipment, and rolling stock such as the tractors, as well as fuel and oil buildings are also present. Generally the buildings are of modern metal frame construction, however the sawmill and some outbuildings are of wood framing with asphalt roof. None of the buildings have been identified as historic resources/properties as a result of this investigation.

***P3b. Resource Attributes:** (List attributes and codes) HP8: Industrial

***P4. Resources Present:** ☐ Building ☐ Structure ☐ Object ☒ Site ☐ District ☐ Element of District ☐ Other (Isolates, etc.)



P5b. Description of Photo: View to the north of sawmill and green chain building.

***P6. Date Constructed/Age and Source:** ☒ Historic ☐ Prehistoric
☐ Both

***P7. Owner and Address:**

***P8. Recorded by:**
James Roscoe
Suzie Van Kirk
William Rich
Roscoe and Associates
Cultural Resource Consultants
3781 Brookwood Dr.
Bayside, CA 95524

***P9. Date Recorded:**
03/18/2010

***P10. Survey Type:** Building Assessment

***P11. Report Citation:**

Roscoe, James

2010 An Historic Building Analysis Letter Report for the Proposed Orick Mill A Demolition Project, Humboldt County, California.

***Attachments:** ☐ NONE ☒ Location Map ☒ Sketch Map ☒ Continuation Sheet ☒ Building, Structure, and Object Record
☐ Archaeological Record ☐ District Record ☐ Linear Feature Record ☐ Milling Station Record ☐ Rock Art Record
☐ Artifact Record ☐ Photograph Record ☐ Other (List): _____

B1. Historic Name: N/A

B2. Common Name: N/A

B3. Original Use: Lumber Mill

B4. Present Use: None

***B5. Architectural Style:**

***B6. Construction History:** Mill A was constructed in 1959-60. New buildings have been added to the complex more recently. There is no evidence of building prior to 1959 in the property.

***B7. Moved?** ☒ No ☐ Yes ☐ Unknown **Date:** N/A

Original Location: N/A

***B8. Related Features:** The Mill A site buildings have been cauterized in to seven groups that are shown on the accompanying map:

1. Sawmill Building (includes the mill, green chain, company office and break room),
2. Shop (modern metal building),
3. Oil House,
4. Hog Fuel Building, Conveyor and Fuel Bin,
5. Steam Cleaning Area, Maintenance Shop, Oil House,
6. Shed, and
7. Other Out Buildings.

B9a. Architect: Unknown

b. Builder: Arcata Redwood Company

***B10. Significance: Theme:** Post 1950s Redwood Lumber Mill

Area: Orick, Humboldt County, California

Period of Significance: 1960-present

Property Type: Industrial lumber mill **Applicable Criteria:** NA

The Arcata Redwood Company (ARCO) was founded in 1939 by Howard A. Libbey, who had been involved first with Little River Redwood Company at Crannell and later with Hobbs, Wall Co. in Crescent City. ARCO's Mill A on the east side of Prairie Creek began operation in April 1960, when the Arcata mill was moved to the Orick location. Built to initially cut 150,000 feet per eight-hour shift, Mill A became an important employer for local residents and when the first announcement that the steady work of 22 years was threatened by a woods and mill closure in the summer of 1982, it came as a "blow" to the Orick community (Arcata *Union* 8 July 1982). In 1988, the mill was purchased by Simpson Timber Company (now California Redwood Co.), which closed it permanently in the fall of 2009.

The post WWII lumber boom transformed communities throughout northern California, and Orick was no exception. From a quiet, pastoral community of Swiss-Italian dairymen and yurok people only seasonally affected by the tourist business that followed construction of the Redwood Highway in the 1920s and 1930s, Orick exploded physically, culturally, and economically when the war ended. Woods workers, equipment operators, truckers, and mill workers from Oregon and Washington, and other parts of the country came to Orick, many with families. Truck garages and equipment repair places, logging company offices, and worker housing appeared over night. The community tried to respond, providing goods and services, entertainment (the Orick Theatre), adequate school facilities, and housing. Local Orick people took advantage of the opportunities, purchasing their own trucks to transport logs, working in the woods and mills, and offering the services and businesses an expanding community required.

There were a dozen or so mills in the Orick area, including the Harding Mill where the Redwood Creek trailhead is located off Bald Hills Road, the Geneva Mill on the highway at Lost Man Creek, the Speier and Lumberman Supply mills up Bald Hills Roads, the big Cal Pac mill on the beach where Redwood National and State Parks Visitor Center is located, ARCO Mill B on Davison Road, and several mills right in Orick. No building from these mills remain today. This was an unprecedented period in local history—a short thirty years or so—which produced lumber for construction throughout this country and employment for thousands, and which ultimately resulted in the creation of Redwood National Park in 1968 and its expansion ten years later.

The Mill building with green chain and employee areas is a 1.5 story woof frame building measuring 30,000 square feet. The building has a cement slab and post/pier foundation. The roof system is constructed of woof frame trusses, supporting a corrugated metal roof. The eastern end of the green chain roof is a prefabricated metal structure addition. The mill building is rambling with several additions along its length. Generally, the windows in the structure are aluminum sliders; however, two sets of wood sash windows are present in the northwest corner. The siding is composed of vertical wood boards with batons. The oil house (building 3), maintenance shop (building 5) and only a few of the associated outbuildings are also constructed of wood framing and board and baton siding. The rest of the buildings are new modern metal structures constructed of clear spar rigid frame buildings.

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes)

***B12. References:**

B13. Remarks: The Mill A buildings were found to not retain any qualities that would qualify them eligible to either the national or California registers of historic places.

***B14. Evaluator:** James Roscoe and William Rich

***Date of Evaluation:** March 2010

(Sketch Map with north arrow required.)

See sketch map

(This space reserved for official comments.)

LOCATION MAP

Primary #:

HRI #:

Trinomial:

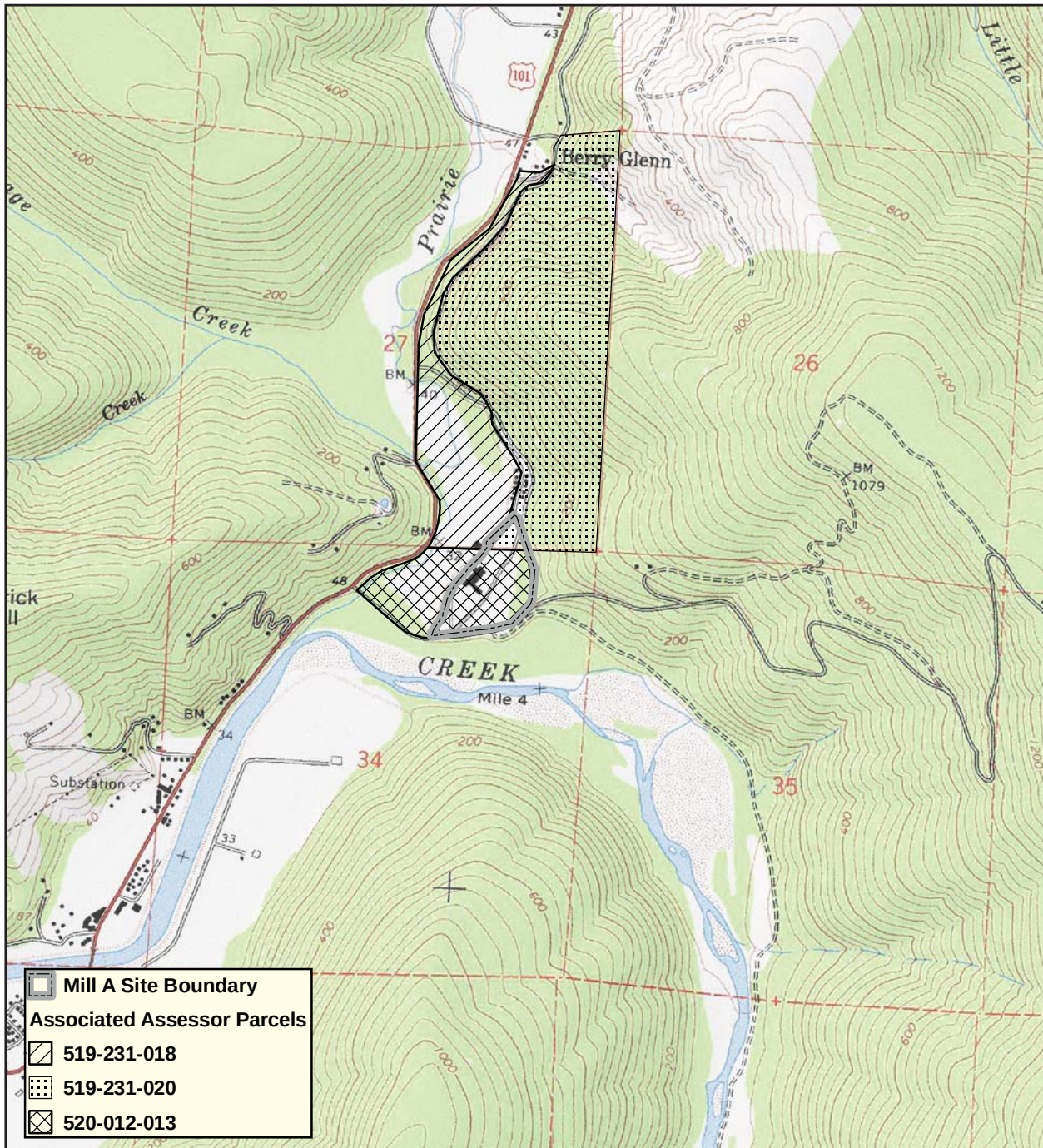
Page 3 of 7

*Resource Name or # Orick Mill A

*Map Name: USGS 7.5' Orick, CA 1966 (PR 1975)

*Scale: 1:24,000

*Date of Map: 03/19/2010



SOURCE: California Spatial Information Library USGS 7.5' Orick, CA 1966 (PR 1975), SCALE: 1:24,000.



QUADRANGLE LOCATION



SKETCH MAP

Primary #:

HRI #:

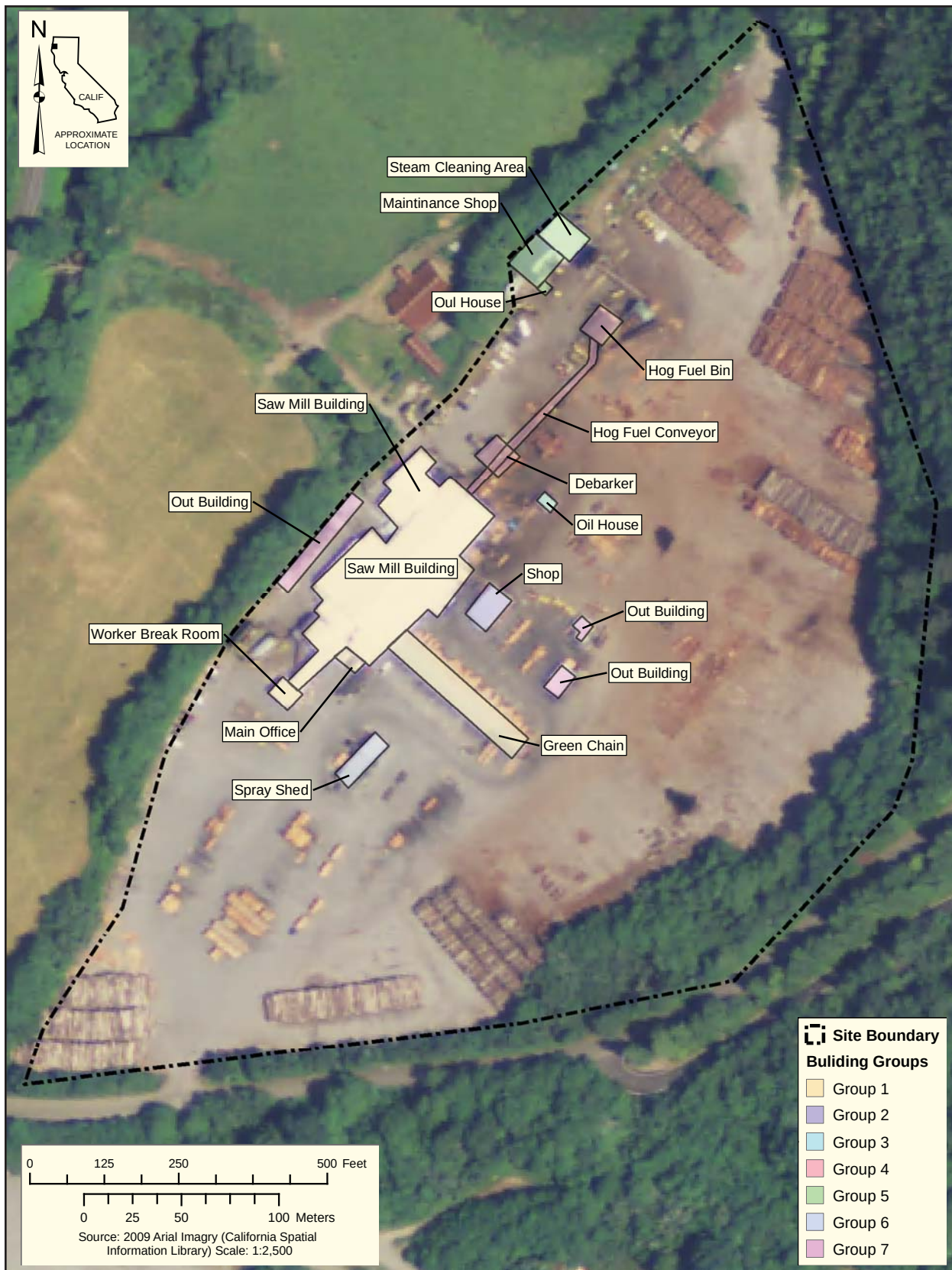
Trinomial:

Page 4 of 7

*Resource Name or # Orick Mill A

*Drawn By: Melinda Salisbury and William Rich

*Date of Map: 03/19/2010



CONTINUATION SHEET

Primary #:

HRI #:

Trinomial:

Page 5 of 7

*Resource Name or # Orick Mill A

*Recorded By: Roscoe et al.

*Date: March 2010

☒ Continuation ☐ Update

Building Group 1



View to the north of Sawmill building.



View from mill looking down green chain.



Company office, view to the northeast.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Primary #:

HRI #:

Trinomial:

Page 7 of 7

*Resource Name or # Orick Mill A

*Recorded By: Roscoe et. al.

*Date of Map: 03/19/2010

☒ Continuation ☐ Update

Building Group 5



View to the west of maintenance shop, Spray shed to the right, oil house to the left.

Building Group 6



View to the south of spray shed

Building Group 7



Miscellaneous out buildings

CONTINUATION SHEET

Primary #:

HRI #:

Trinomial:

Page 6 of 7

*Resource Name or # Orick Mill A

*Recorded By: Roscoe et. al.

*Date of Map: 03/19/2010

☒ Continuation ☐ Update

Building Group 2



View to the northeast of modern metal framed shop

Building Group 3



View to the northeast of oil house



Same oil house, view to the southeast

Building Group 4



Hog fuel conveyor, view to the north



Hog fuel area, view to the west