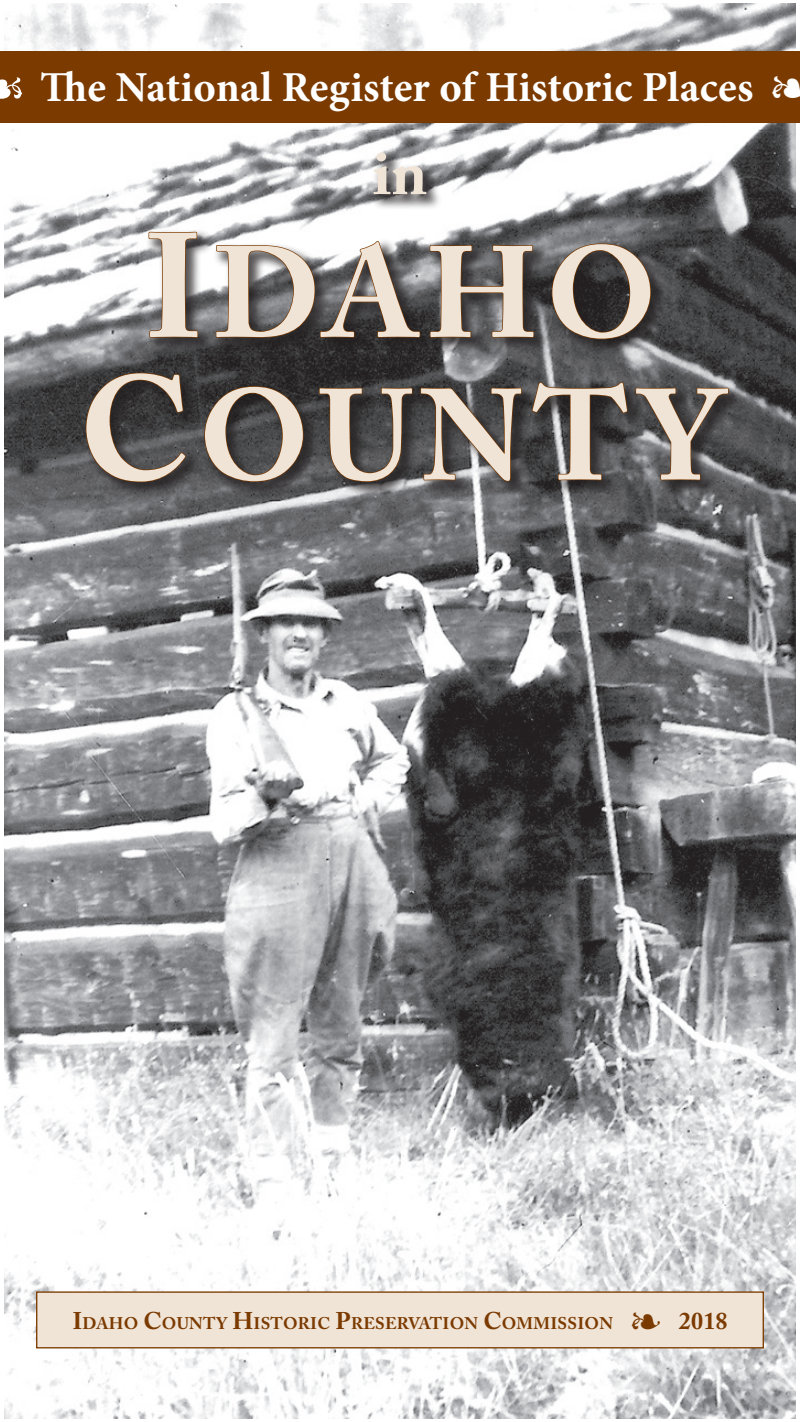
The National Register of Historic Places

in Idaho County



Idaho County Historic Preservation Commission 2018

Foreword

This guide identifies Idaho County properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It is designed to stimulate your curiosity and encourage you to seek more information about these and other important places in Idaho's history.

Most of the properties are privately owned and are not open to the public. Please respect the occupant's right to privacy when viewing these special and historic properties.

Publication of this free guide is possible through a grant from the National Park Service administered by the Idaho State Historical Society (ISHS).

Idaho County Historic Preservation Commission

This guide was compiled by the Idaho County Historic Preservation Commission whose purpose is to preserve and enhance cultural and historic sites throughout Idaho County and to increase awareness of the value of historic preservation to citizens and local businesses.

Commission members are volunteers appointed by the Idaho County Commissioners. Current commission members include Cindy Schacher, President; Penny Casey, Secretary; Jamie Edmondson, Treasurer; Jim Huntley, Jerry Johnson and Jane Spencer.

Acknowledgements

The Idaho County Historic Preservation Commission recognizes the assistance and support from the following people to complete this project:

Ann Swanson (ISHS)—Photos and editorial assistance

Suzi Pengilly (ISHS)—Editorial assistance

Cindy Schacher—Photos and editorial assistance

Mary Lorish Jahn—Design and printing coordination

Table of Contents

Site	Name	Page
Introduction		**4**
1	Baker House	5
2	Polly Bemis Cabin	6
3	Big Cedar School	7-8
4	Blue Fox Theatre	9
5	Campbell's Ferry	10
6	Chinese Cemetery	11
7	Elfers' Barn and Field	12
8	Elk City Wagon Road	13
9	Fenn Ranger Station	14
10	First Presbyterian Church	15
11	Dr. Foskett Home and Drugstore	16
12	Blacky Foster House	17
13	Gold Point Mill	18
14	Lochsa Historical Ranger Station	19
Locator Map		**20-21**
15	Lolo Trail National Historic Landmark	22-23
16	Sue McBeth Cabin	24
17	Meinert Ranch Cabin	25
18	Jim Moore Place	26
19	Moose Creek Ranger Station	27-28
20	Riggins Motel	29
21	Monastery of St. Gertrude	30-31
22	State Bank of Kooskia	32
23	Warren Guard Station	33
24	White Bird Grade	34
Nez Perce Indian Historical Sites		**35**
25	Tolo Lake	36
26	White Bird Battlefield	37
27	Looking Glass Camp	38
28	Clearwater Battlefield	39

Idaho County History

Idaho County, the largest in Idaho at 8,503 square miles, has a rich history beginning with the Nez Perce who inhabited the area some 10,000 years ago. In the mid to late 19th century trappers, miners, ranchers, farmers and homesteaders populated the area.

Idaho County was named for the Columbia River steamer *Idaho* launched in June 9, 1860 to transport gold seekers in north Idaho. By 1861, there was a settlement in the new county, but no town existed until the following year when the local government was formed in Elk City. In August 1861 rich placer deposits discovered in the mountains of north-central Idaho brought thousands of miners. By the fall of 1862, a sea of tents, lean-tos and make-shift houses had become the boom town of Florence. When Idaho County was established February 4, 1864 by the first Idaho Territorial Legislature, Florence was named the county seat. With the influx of miners and settlers into the area, conflicts arose with the native inhabitants culminating with the 1877 Nez Perce War.

As gold fever waned, so did Florence. The county seat was moved to Mount Idaho from 1875-1902, and then to Grangeville.

In the early 1900s, the newly established Forest Service built ranger stations and made other improvements in the forests of north-central Idaho to aid in the agency mission of protecting forest resources. The forest-products industry flourished in the mid- to late-1900s with several logging camps and mills located across the county.

Baker House ❧ 1

The James and Sophia Baker house is a stop on the continuum of Camas Prairie's evolution. The first settlers to the prairie responded to the news of a gold strike in the Pierce area in 1861. Miners, speculators, and merchants came from all corners of the world to find their fortune. After the gold strike waned, more permanent settlers chose the area as their home and source of livelihood.

After a brief stay in Walla Walla, Washington in 1899, Illinois native James V. Baker settled in Cottonwood for ten years where he drove freight wagons and farmed. He again pulled up roots but returned to Cottonwood in 1915 where he purchased lots in town and began construction on a Craftsman-style dwelling. Completed in May 1916, the *Camas Prairie Chronicle* described Baker's house as "one of the finest residences this side of Spokane." In 1936, the family moved once again to Lewiston Orchards where James raised fruit. The subsequent owner, Arthur Martzen, was the son of an immigrant from Luxembourg. He raised stock and grain and lived in the house until 1963.

This house, built by local builder John Reiland, exhibits many characteristics of the Craftsman style popularized in southern California in the early 20th century. Identifying features include unenclosed roof eaves with exposed rafters, false braces added under the gables, and porches supported by substantial tapered columns. The Baker house remains as the best example of Craftsman-style architecture in Cottonwood.

Listed: *2004* ***Ownership:*** *Private*
Location: *204 Broadway Street, Cottonwood, Idaho.*
Photos: *Idaho State Historical Society*

2 ❧ Polly Bemis Cabin

By 1870, Chinese miners made up as much as half of Idaho's population. With them came very few Chinese women about which little is known. Polly Bemis is an exception.

Born Lalu Nathoy in Peking, China on September 11, 1853, Polly was indentured by her father, who allegedly needed money to buy grain for the next year's crop and to keep the rest of his family from starving. At the age of 18 she came to Warren, Idaho along with many other Chinese who were seeking gold and probably worked in a saloon as an entertainer.

The legend is that Charlie Bemis won Polly's contract from the saloon keeper in a poker game. She moved in with Charlie and ran a boarding house and did laundry. Motivated by the Chinese Deportation Act, Charlie married Polly on August 14, 1894, when she was 47 years old and had lived in Idaho for 27 years. After Charlie was shot in the face by a disgruntled poker player in 1893, Charlie and Polly moved to his Salmon River ranch. Polly nursed Charlie, but he never regained his health after he was shot. Polly survived by raising vegetables and fruit on the ranch.

In 1922 the original Bemis cabin burned and Charlie died later that year. Peter Klinkhammer and Charlie Shepp, who lived across the river, built a new cabin for Polly and she remained on the river raising produce until she became ill. Klinkhammer and Shepp took her to a nursing home in Grangeville where she died on November 6, 1933. In June 1987 Polly's body was exhumed and buried again in her flower garden on the ranch.

***Listed**: 1988* ***Ownership**: Private*
***Location**: On Polly Creek, approximately 40 miles up the Salmon River from Riggins, Idaho. Accessible by boat.*
***Photo**: Idaho State Historical Society*

Big Cedar School ❧ 3

Big Cedar School finds its way to the National Register of Historic Places as an example of a gable-front, one-room schoolhouse. Defining features include a rectangular foot print, wood clapboard siding, and a lack of applied ornamentation. The school, located on Red Fir Road about 10 miles southeast of Kooskia, also symbolizes the evolution of rural education during the early 20th century.

Constructed in 1920, the school had one classroom and a cloakroom. It replaced a log schoolhouse built when School District 86 formed six years before. The new school was built in response to pressure from the Progressive Era, a national movement to improve rural schools.

According to school district records, Robert Fluharty, a local homesteader and farmer, was paid $267 to construct the building and $54.35 was paid for lumber. Furnishings were purchased from Sears & Roebuck Company for $285.17. There was no electricity or plumbing for many years.

3 ❧ Big Cedar School (continued)

The first teacher was Nellie Thomas, a native of Iowa. She was paid $125 a month. Student numbers varied from 8 to 25 during the school's operation. Some of the students traveled by horse, skis or foot as far as three miles to attend the school.

The only public building for miles, the school also served as a dance hall, meeting house, polling place and church meeting space.

As rural populations dwindled and motor transportation became more available, the State mandated consolidation. By the mid-1950s, School District 86 was absorbed into School District 241, which encompassed a good portion of Idaho County. Big Cedar's remoteness extended its use until 1960. By then, the student population was six and the patrons voted to close.

In 1962, the school was purchased at an auction and moved across the road. The Big Cedar Community currently uses the building as a gathering place for area residents.

***Listed**: 2017* ***Ownership**: Private*
***Location**: The school is located at 947 Red Fir Road about 10 miles southeast of Kooskia, Idaho.*
***Photo**: Reed Family Collection and Big Cedar Community Center Collection*

Blue Fox Theater ❧ 4

The Blue Fox was built in November, 1929, by J.R. Adkison, a Clarkston, Washington contractor. W.T. Cregan of Seattle designed its interior. It opened on May 2, 1930, at which time the 'Lyric' theater, located adjacent to the Blue Fox, was discontinued. Eventually, both were owned by Al J. Wagner who was born in North Dakota and moved to Cottonwood, Idaho, in about 1910. He attended the University of Idaho and was employed as a bookkeeper at the Cottonwood Bank. Wagner became interested in the moving picture business and started leasing halls in Cottonwood, Winchester and Craigmont, where he showed films using a portable movie projector.

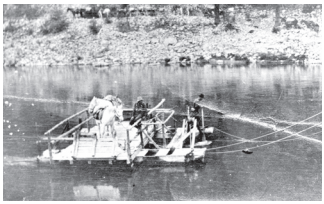
The Blue Fox theater was named by J.H. Dickson of Lucile, Idaho who was given $10 and 3 free tickets for winning a naming contest.

The marquee and tower, complete with neon lights, were added in 1940. A basement fire gutted the interior of the theater in 1942 and caused heavy smoke damage to several adjacent apartments and retail establishments. Wagner rebuilt the Blue Fox and reopened in 1945. The original chairs were salvaged and reinstalled, along with improved heating and air conditioning systems and new sound and projection equipment.

In 1954, Wagner's son Port, together with his wife Eleanor (Poofy), took over the operation of the theater. Today the theater is operated by Port and Eleanor's son, Chris Wagner. The theater still provides entertainment for the area's population. In its earlier days, the theater also hosted live entertainment productions such as musicals, local school programs and vaudeville shows.

***Listed**: 1999* ***Ownership**: Private*
***Location**: 116 West Main Street, Grangeville, Idaho.*
***Photos**: Eleanor (Poofy) Wagner; Idaho State Historical Society*

5 ❧ Campbell's Ferry



At the turn of the 20th century, William Campbell and associates were contracted to build a trail and ferry. The Three Blaze Trail began at Grangeville proceeding to Dixie and across the Salmon River and the Chamberlain Basin wilderness to the Monumental Creek trail terminating at Thunder Mountain. Campbell's Ferry provided the doorway into one of the last gold rushes in the American West. It was estimated that nearly 1,800 men used the trail and ferry between 1900 and 1902.

After Campbell's mysterious disappearance during the winter of 1902-1903, the property changed hands until Joe Zaunmiller and his wife, Emma, became owners of the ranch. In 1938, Emma met a premature death when her horse bolted and she was struck by low-lying branches in the apple orchard.

Joe hired Lydia Frances Coyle, known as Frances, as a cook and ranch hand after meeting her on the Three Blaze Trail. Eventually they married and Frances began writing a weekly newspaper column detailing her remote life on the Salmon River.

Frances advocated for a bridge at Campbell's Ferry to replace the dangerous ferry crossing. Through her newspaper column, she generated public support and the bridge, linking the Payette and Nez Perce National Forests, was completed in 1956. To celebrate, she and Joe cut the ferryboat loose and it drifted down the river.

***Listed**: 2007* ***Ownership**: Private. Protected by a restrictive easement held by the Trust for Public Lands.*

***Location**: Southeast bank of Salmon River at River Mile 148, Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness.*

***Photos**: Idaho State Historical Society*

Chinese Cemetery ❧ 6

The gold rush of 1848 brought thousands of Chinese immigrants to California seeking fortunes in the gold fields, railroad camps, fish canneries, and later, the great agricultural ranches of the southwest. The wave of immigrants soon journeyed beyond California, arriving in Idaho during the 1860s.

From 1870-1900, it is estimated that 600 to 1,200 Chinese influenced the social and cultural composition of the Warren Mining District and at least 12 Chinese mining companies monopolized the gravel placers. Although Chinese miners were unable to purchase land, they were permitted to buy claims or lease the rights to placer operations, which they often processed two or three times.

Northwest of Warren in a lodgepole pine forest, this Chinese cemetery was used from 1870–1890. It is believed that nameplates affixed to wooden markers were used to identify the 29 graves that were exhumed and shipped back to China as late as the 1930s. The grave of Too Hay, a Chinese female friend of Polly Bemis is also here. In keeping with Chinese tradition, women's remains were not exhumed but were left behind.

The site containing the Chinese cemetery has remained essentially unchanged since 1890. The original trail, used historically by the Chinese to visit the cemetery, is still used by visitors today.

***Listed**: 1994* ***Ownership**: USDA Forest Service, Payette National Forest*
***Location**: 0.5 mi. NW of Warren Wagon Road at Bemis Creek, Warren, Idaho.*
***Photo**: Payette National Forest*

7 ❧ Elfers' Barn and Field

The Elfers' Ranch, located along John Day Creek, was the site of one of several events that sparked the Nez Perce War. In June of 1877, non-treaty Nez Perce bands, resigned to moving onto the reservation at Lapwai, were camped at Tolo Lake near Grangeville. Angered by their plight, a group of young Nez Perce men left the camp intending to retaliate for past violence by settlers against their people. With growing aggression, they raided several settlements along the Salmon River. Jurden Henry Elfers, his nephew, and a hired hand, working between the barn and the field above, were three of their victims. Elfers' barn, constructed sometime before 1877, still stands as a witness to these events.

Anticipating a military response to these raids, Chief Joseph and other Nez Perce leaders moved their camp south to White Bird Creek. Soldiers from Fort Lapwai, aided by volunteers from nearby Mount Idaho, attacked the White Bird camp at dawn on June 17, 1877, igniting the first battle of the Nez Perce War.

For more information about the Nez Perce War and the Nez Perce National Historical Park, visit www.nps.gov/nepe.

***Listed**: 2007* ***Ownership**: Private*
***Location**: US Highway 95, north of Lucile, Idaho at the mouth of John Day Creek.*
***Photo**: Idaho State Historical Society*

Elk City Wagon Road ❧ 8

The Nez Perce Indians used this route for decades to access the buffalo hunting grounds in western Montana. When gold was discovered in 1861 at Elk City, the miners traveled this trail to the new diggings. The new settlement needed improved roads for passengers and freight so the wagon road was improved and finished in 1895. Early homesteads served as way stations to provide food and shelter for travelers and their stock. When a water grade road (State Highway 14) was completed along the South Fork of the Clearwater River in 1934, it provided an improved route to Elk City.

Traveling the Wagon Road is an interesting adventure trip. It winds 53 miles from Harpster to Elk City, crossing two divides and reaching an elevation of 6,282 feet. It is a mostly unimproved dirt roadbed with narrow spots and tight switchbacks, but can be traversed (although slowly) in a car that has a normal ground clearance. Large recreational vehicles are not encouraged to travel the road and snow restricts its use to the summer months. Check with the Nez Perce National Forest Headquarters Office or Elk City Ranger Station for current road and weather conditions. There are no gas stations or traveler services along the Wagon Road, so fill up with gas at Kooskia, Grangeville, Harpster, or Elk City. The return trip along State Highway 14 is 50 miles long.

Friends of the Elk City Wagon Road work to preserve the history of the road and the road itself. They sponsor an annual Wagon Road event the third weekend in July. Volunteers assist with interpretation of historically significant sites during a self-guided tour of the road.

***Listed**: 2001* ***Ownership**: USDA Forest Service, Nez Perce-Clearwater NF*
***Location**: State Highway 13 at Harpster, Idaho, then 53 miles southeast along unimproved road to Elk City, Idaho.*
***Photo**: Idaho State Historical Society*

9 ❧ Fenn Ranger Station

Named after Frank A. Fenn, the first Forest Supervisor of the Clearwater National Forest, Fenn Ranger Station was built during the years 1937-1940 at a cost that was staggering for the time, $500,000. The station was one of the most elaborate built by the Forest Service. Attention to site design and building placement had not previously been seen in Forest Service facilities. Members of the Civilian Conservation Corps, a government agency created to employ young men during The Great Depression of the 1930s, built the structures at the site.

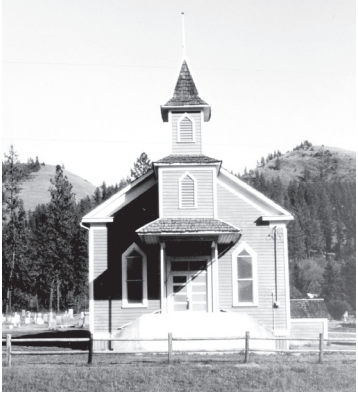
The design of the Fenn Ranger Station reflects its use as a dual district office. The offices of the Middlefork and Selway ranger districts were built in mirror image of one another and two warehouses and two garages were constructed to handle the everyday workload and storage needs of both districts. The two ranger's residences were also constructed in mirror image of one another, and shared a common garage. Seasonal workers were housed in one large bunkhouse and the cookhouse accommodated forty people.

Fenn Ranger Station was the first of its kind in the area. Earlier Forest Service facilities were log structures built by the rangers on "contributed time" and were subject to the skills of the individuals building them.

Fenn Ranger Station is the current base of operations for the Moose Creek Ranger District. Interpretive materials, information and maps are available to the public at the Fenn Ranger Station visitor center.

Listed: 1990 ***Ownership:*** *USDA Forest Service, Nez Perce-Clearwater NF*
Location: *5 miles east of Lowell, Idaho on Selway River Road (Forest Road 223).*
Photo: *Nez Perce-Clearwater NF*

First Indian Presbyterian Church ❧ 10



This historic church and cemetery are located on land allotted to the family of Chief Lawyer of the Nez Perce Tribe. Chief Lawyer was the son of Twisted Hair who, as a boy, had seen Lewis and Clark at Weippe Prairie in 1805. He became the first elder of the church and helped Henry Spalding translate the Bible into the Nez Perce language.

Missionary Henry Spalding moved to Kamiah from Spalding, Idaho, in 1873, bringing with him Nez Perce members of the First Church of Oregon which he and Marcus Whitman organized on August 18, 1838. Kate and Sue McBeth continued Henry Spalding's work here. Their house, that also served as their school, still stands across US Highway 12 west of the church.

In 1871, government funds were used to build the Kamiah church in the Greek Revival style. In 1890, it was renovated into the Gothic Revival style. The First Indian Presbyterian Church is the oldest active church in Idaho. Services are held every Sunday and hymns are still sung in the Nez Perce language.

***Listed**: 1976* ***Ownership**: Private*
***Location**: East of Kamiah, Idaho on US Highway 12 near milepost 69.*
***Photos**: Idaho State Historical Society*

11 ❧ Foskett Home and Drugstore

Dr. Wilson Foskett was a physician who practiced in White Bird, Idaho from 1899 until his death in 1924. He married Loris Taylor in 1902 and they had three children. Dr. Foskett built this Victorian-style house, one room of which served as his office. Between 1910 and 1914, Dr. Foskett added a second building about 70 feet to the south of the house that served as a drugstore.

Being the only physician in this isolated area, Dr. Foskett served his far-flung residents by horseback. Because of his unwaivering dedication, he was universally respected and gained almost legendary status. By the early 1920s, Dr. Foskett abandoned horseback travel and, whenever possible, visited his patients by automobile. On April 13, 1924 he presided over the birth of a baby near Riggins. After a long night's labor, he started the drive back to White Bird. Near Slate Creek, his car left the road and plunged into the Salmon River, killing the doctor.

Upon Dr. Foskett's death, his wife converted the drugstore into a confectionary and soda fountain where she sold sundries. She also took in boarders. In order to facilitate her operation of the two businesses, the drugstore building was moved in 1926 to its present location, immediately adjacent to the house, and the two buildings were connected. In 1929 she married Fred Otto and they remodeled the interior of the house.

***Listed**: 2005* ***Ownership**: Private*
***Location**: West side of River Road, White Bird, Idaho.*
***Photo**: Idaho State Historical Society*

Blacky Foster House ❧ 12

Blacky Foster constructed the house about 1930 at his placer mining operation. His son, Willard Foster, also lived there from 1946 to 1949, filing three mining claims in the area. The Fosters left the site sometime in the late 1940s or early 1950s. By 1952, the cabin was occupied by another placer miner, Johnny Briggs, who located the 'Lucky B' placer claim at Smith Gulch in that year.

The building is constructed of three horizontal courses of large-diameter logs, topped by short vertical log sections forming the upper walls and gables. This method of log construction allows one person to erect a cabin. The walls originally were chinked with moss, held in place by tarpaper strips tacked to the logs both inside and out. (This moss chinking was replaced with moisture-repelling oakum when the cabin was restored in 2003.)

Like many Salmon River miners, Blacky Foster used a sweep-boat to reach his claim. Once there, he dismantled the boat to provide lumber for the cabin's roof and floor planks, cellar stairs and workbench. The tar used to seal the boat seams is still present on the edges of the original planks, and a portion of the boat's tapered oar or "sweep" is visible in the cabin roof. The house has a dirt-floor root cellar accessed via a trapdoor in the floor. The foundation consists of hand-stacked rock.

This single room log building is located within the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness, 50 feet west of Smith Gulch, on a river bench north of the Salmon River.

***Listed**: 1992* ***Ownership**: USDA Forest Service, Bitterroot National Forest*
***Location**: Along the Salmon River, west of Shoup, Idaho.*
***Photo**: Bitterroot National Forest*

13 ❧ Gold Point Mill

Constructed in 1936, the Gold Point Mill is an excellent example of the architectural and engineering styles of small mills that concentrated gold ore during the early 1900s. The mill was typical of those used for stock company-financed lode mining. Such mills were often built before it was determined whether or not sufficient gold ore was present to make them pay.

The mill was made from locally produced timber and housed machinery for the amalgamation and concentration of gold ores. Its location provided relatively easy access to the Gold Point Mine's adits and shafts, and its hillside location allowed gravity to help move the ore within the buildings. If retreatment of the ore was necessary, an elevator delivered material from the lowest level to the ball mill. The mill, log cabin, and mess hall buildings remain essentially unchanged since their construction over 70 years ago.

Like many mining operations, the Gold Point Mill became unprofitable, and its operations were discontinued. This site provides a unique opportunity for showing how machinery was used to process gold ore during the 1930s, and it is one of the best examples in Idaho of a small amalgamation and concentration mill. The mill complex is now owned by the Elk City Area Alliance, Inc., and is in the process of being preserved.

***Listed**: 2000* ***Ownership**: Private (buildings); Public (land)*
***Location**: Approximately 8 miles southeast of Elk City on Forest Road 222.*
***Photo**: Nez Perce-Clearwater NF*

Lochsa Historical Ranger Station ❧ 14

Dating back to the 1920s and 1930s, the buildings at the Lochsa Historical Ranger Station were built primarily from native materials. Anything not locally available was packed to the site with mules.

Because the ranger station wasn't accessible by road until 1952, transporting materials and furnishings required ingenuity and horse or mule power. The 375-pound bathtub in the ranger's house was skidded to the site behind a mule team.

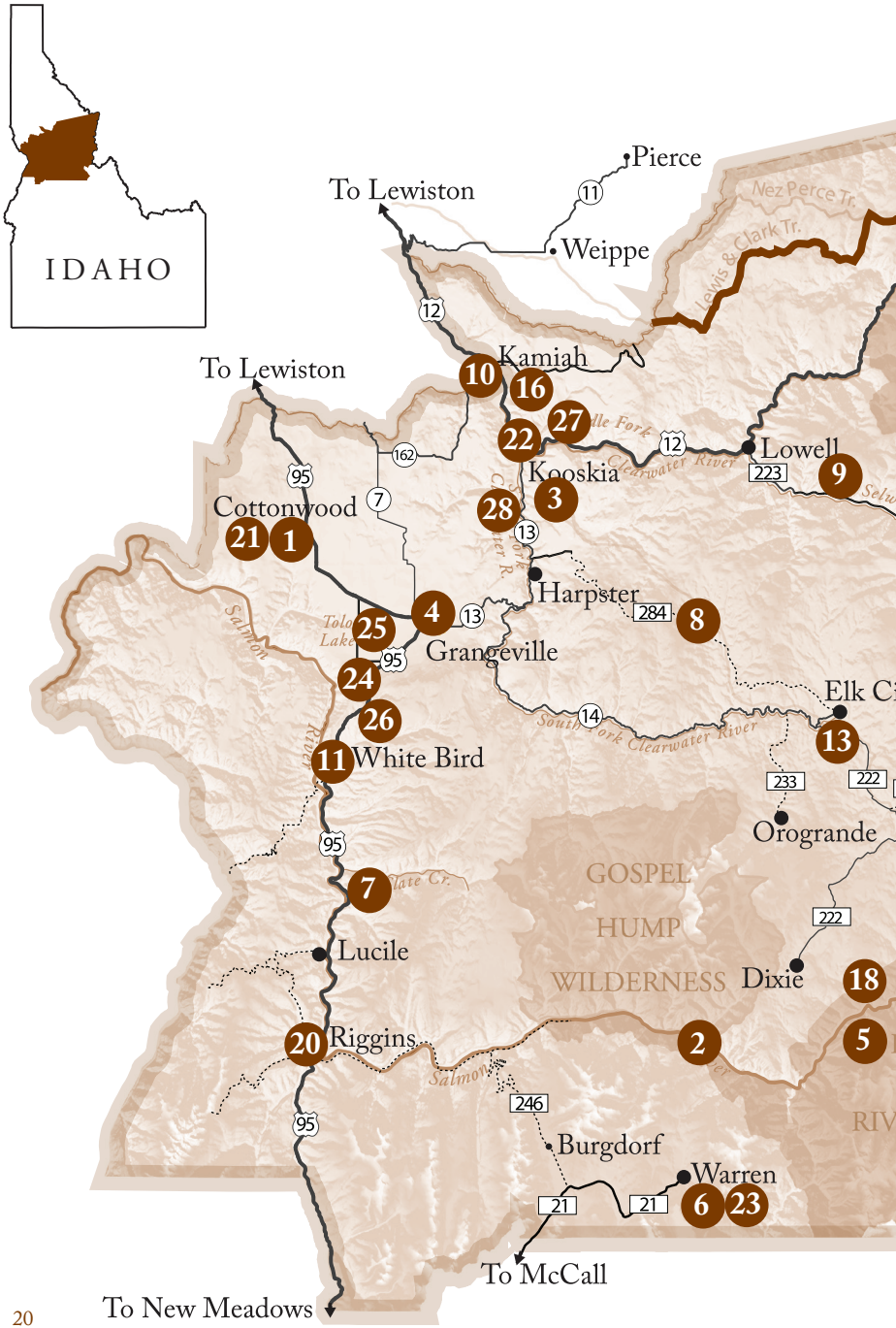
Work at the ranger district was seasonal. Crews spent most of the summer building and maintaining trails and telephone lines, and fighting fires.

When the 60,000 acre Pete King Fire roared up the Lochsa Canyon in August 1934, the station and 200 men were saved against all odds. As sparks from the fire showered down, the buildings were doused with water. Tools, gear, and food were thrown in the river to save them from the flames.

The Lochsa Historical Ranger Station is managed to preserve the nostalgic character of a working ranger district typical of the 1920s. Forest Service personnel and volunteers stabilize and care for the structures and artifacts. A self-guided walking tour gives visitors a better understanding of the Forest Service's 100-year-old heritage. The Visitor Center is open every day from Memorial Day through Labor Day. Hours are 9 A.M. – 5 P.M.

***Listed**: 1978* ***Ownership**: USDA Forest Service, Nez Perce-Clearwater NF*
***Location**: US Highway 12, milepost 121.*
***Photos**: Meg McGuire; Nez Perce-Clearwater NF*

Idaho County Locator Map



1 Baker House
2 Polly Bemis Cabin
3 Big Cedar School
4 Blue Fox Theatre
5 Campbell's Ferry
6 Chinese Cemetery
7 Elfers' Barn and Field
8 Elk City Wagon Road
9 Fenn Ranger Station
10 First Presbyterian Church
11 Dr. Foskett Home and Drugstore
12 Blacky Foster House
13 Gold Point Mill
14 Lochsa Historical Ranger Station
15 Lolo Trail National Historic Landmark
16 Sue McBeth Cabin
17 Meinert Ranch Cabin
18 Jim Moore Place
19 Moose Creek Ranger Station
20 Riggins Motel
21 Monastery of St. Gertrude
22 State Bank of Kooskia
23 Warren Guard Station
24 White Bird Grade
25 Tolo Lake
26 White Bird Battlefield
27 Looking Glass Camp
28 Clearwater Battlefield

15 ❧ Lolo Trail National Historic Landmark

Created to commemorate its extensive history as well as retain and protect the historic setting, character, landscape and sites of the Lolo Trail Corridor, the Lolo Trail National Historic Landmark was designated in 1963. Its significance lies in its roots as an ancient Nimiipuu or Nez Perce trail, the route that Lewis and Clark traveled in the early 19th century as well as the flight of the Nimiipuu during the 1877 conflict with the United States government. The Landmark stretches some 62 miles and covers 60,000 acres from the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests boundary near Musselshell Meadows to the Forest boundary at Lolo Pass.

National Historic Landmarks are nationally significant historic places designated by the Secretary of the Interior for their exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States. National Historic Landmarks are exceptional places. They form a common bond between all Americans and while there are many historic places across the nation, only a small number have meaning to all Americans.

Visitors to the Landmark can walk or ride horses on sections of the Lewis and Clark and Nimiipuu Trails. Much of the Landmark is accessible by traveling on the Lolo Motorway, Forest Road #500. This 1930s road built by the Forest Service and men of the Civilian Conservation Corps, winds along the high elevation ridges above the Lochsa River. The road is narrow, rocky, and slow-going and high clearance vehicles are recommended. There are no gas stations, stores, developed water sources or other services along this 100 miles of road in a sea of mountains.

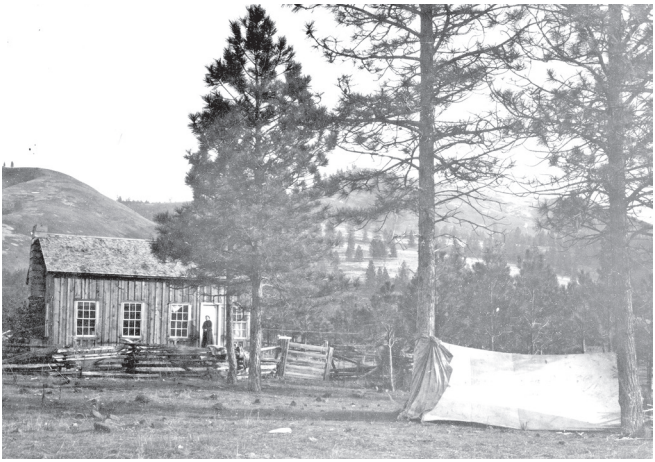
***Listed**: 1966* ***Ownership**: USDA Forest Service, Nez Perce-Clearwater NF*

***Location**: From the east, take Parachute Hill Road #569, which intersects with U.S. Highway 12 before the turnoff to Powell Ranger Station. Or take Saddle Camp Road #107 that leaves the highway 22 miles west of that junction.*

From the west, follow the national forest access sign posted along Highway 12 as you leave Kamiah. Turn onto Kamiah-Pierce Road #100. Follow Road #100 to Lolo Forks Campground. Cross the bridge and turn right onto Road #500.

***Photos**: Cindy Schacher*

16 ❧ Sue McBeth Cabin



Missionary efforts in the Kamiah area were briefly initiated in 1839 by Congregationalist Asa Smith who stayed only two years in this remote upriver location. His work was followed by Henry H. Spalding, founder of the Lapwai mission near present-day Lewiston, Idaho. After Spalding's death in 1874, missionaries Sue and Kate McBeth assumed duties at Kamiah in support of the First Indian Presbyterian Church now located across US Highway 12 from the cabin.

The McBeth cabin was constructed in 1880 as a home for Sue McBeth and as their missionary school. Five years later, the sisters left Kamiah due to conflicts with the Indian agent. Sue relocated to Mount Idaho near Grangeville, and Kate settled in Lapwai. The McBeth sisters, along with other notable figures in Nez Perce history, are buried in the cemetery behind the Kamiah church.

***Listed**: 1976* ***Ownership**: Private*
***Location**: US Highway 12, east of Kamiah, Idaho, near milepost 69.*
***Photos**: Idaho State Historical Society*

Meinert Ranch Cabin ❧ 17

Irad and Emma Meinert built their one and one-half-story cabin in 1915. They were married in 1895 and, after working in California, South America and Colorado and constructing sawmills at Florence and Warren, they moved to Red River Hot Springs. Irad was an engineer experienced with machinery and construction methods.

Located near the Southern Nez Perce Trail, the hot springs had long been used by the Nez Perce Indians and early mountain men. The site was also a traditional stopping point for the Nez Perce as they went to Montana to trade and hunt buffalo.

The cabin was constructed using horizontally laid logs with notched ends and angular pieces of logs for chinking. The lumber used on the cabin and other hot springs buildings was cut with a water-powered sawmill built on the ranch at the mouth of Otterson Creek. The Meinerts also built the original road to Red River Hot Springs. The cabin site included a vegetable garden and livestock meadows where foodstuffs were grown for the Meinerts and their guests. Irad died in 1946, and Emma died in 1963 at the age of 98.

"In memory of Irad C. and Emma Reese Meinert, pioneer homesteaders who settled here in 1910. Dedicated by Gertrude Maxwell."

***Listed**: 1987* ***Ownership**: Private*
***Location**: 1.8 mi. southwest of Red River Hot Springs on Forest Road 234 (Red River–Beargrass Road).*
***Photos**: Chris Thompson*

18 ❧ Jim Moore Place

Jim Moore originally located a mineral claim here in 1898 but later focused his efforts on raising hay and developing an orchard. There are ten structures at the site, nine of which were constructed of hewn logs and a root cellar constructed of native rock and log timbers. Remnants of horse-drawn farming implements are also present.

The terrace where Jim Moore lived for nearly 50 years was on the route to the Thunder Mountain and Dixie gold fields. This site was used as a stopover and camp spot for early miners. Jim Moore obtained money by placer mining and selling homemade liquor and homegrown vegetables to the miners passing through the area. Jim Moore died in 1942 and is buried on the ranch. There were several owners of the property after Jim's death and in the late 1960s, the land passed into Forest Service ownership.

In the early 1980s, the Forest Service initiated a restoration project on many of these buildings. Rotted wall and gable logs, and roof purlins were replaced. Several buildings also received new roofs. The Jim Moore Place is maintained for its historical significance as one of the few remaining early historic era sites within the Salmon River Canyon.

***Listed**: 1976* ***Ownership**: USDA Forest Service, Nez Perce-Clearwater NF*
***Location**: Overlooking the Salmon River, approximately 60 miles upriver from Riggins. Access by jet boat or by hiking the Salmon River Trail.*
***Photos**: Nez Perce-Clearwater NF*

Moose Creek Ranger Station ❧ 19

The Moose Creek Ranger Station's beautiful log buildings have played an integral part in the history of the Moose Creek Ranger District and the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness. This unique ranger station has been vital to the back country management of the area since the early 1920s.

The actions that led to the establishment of the Moose Creek Ranger Station began in 1891 when Congress authorized President Benjamin Harrison to withdraw public lands and create forest reserves. The Bitter Root Forest Reserve, within the boundary of which the Moose Creek Ranger Station is located, was one of the earliest of 12 reserves nationally. In 1907, Forest Reserves were changed to National Forests.

The first assignment given to the rangers of the Bitter Root Forest Reserve was to select desirable administrative sites. Ranger Stations were to be "reasonably accessible to the forests and to the settlements, to have ample horse feed, a good water supply and be situated on either flat land or land with a gentle slope." Locating administrative sites required trails to gain access to the remote backcountry. The long and painstaking work of constructing the trail along the Selway River to Moose Creek Ranger Station began in 1907.

The large flat on which the present-day ranger station exists was an ideal spot for an administrative site. The ranger station was specifically constructed to accommodate crews for trail and phone line maintenance for the important task of the young Forest Service: fire protection.

19 ❧ Moose Creek Ranger Station (continued)

Ranger Jack Parsell built the first cabin at the station in 1921. He and his new bride occupied the "honeymoon" cabin now known as the cookhouse/office. Over the next few years the ranger station expanded to accommodate the larger crews that worked in the area. All of the buildings were constructed with local materials to blend in with the rugged wilderness setting. Materials that could not be obtained locally were either packed in by mule or flown to the site. One of these items was a cast iron tub packed in by mules over 25 miles of treacherous trail along the Selway River.

Moose Creek was designated early as a training center. In 1923, Forest Service personnel taught men how to become smokechasers and lookouts. They learned to orient and read contour maps, use an azimuth circle and alidade, run a compass line, pace distances, and put out forest fires.

The existing airfields were carved out of the heavy timber. The short runway was constructed with "muscle power and mules" in 1931 when backcountry flying was in its infancy. The long airstrip was built in 1958. One of the first smoke-jumper bases was established at Moose Creek in 1940. From this base, the first smoke jump was made by the Forest Service. These airfields continue to provide access to a unique and invigorating experience in the remote wilderness area.

Listed *: 1990* ***Ownership****: USDA Forest Service, Nez Perce-Clearwater NF*
Location*: In the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness at the confluence of Moose Creek and the Selway River. Access by vehicle via Selway River Road (Forest Road 223) to its terminus at Race Creek, then on foot or horseback 28 miles on the Selway River Trail (Forest Trail 4) to the site. The site can also be accessed by small mountain aircraft.*
Photos*: George Turner, John B. Forsman*

The Riggins Motel ❧ 20

After Idaho County native Jack Rowe honeymooned with his bride, Veda, near Riggins, they bought property at the city limits and, in 1946, constructed a three-room house. Possibly inspired by the post-war housing shortage and a Veterans Administration manual on motel ownership, Jack then built another cottage closer to the road. Two multi-room units were added in 1947, and the Riggins Motel was open for business. By 1952 all of the buildings presently on the site were completed.

In the 1920s, the production of low-cost automobiles afforded average American families the ability to own their own transportation. As recreational travel increased, so did the demand for inexpensive and auto-friendly accommodations. Most hotels were located downtown and were expensive and inconvenient for most auto travelers. Motels and motor courts were then developed as alternatives to hotels and usually located near a highway at the edge of town.

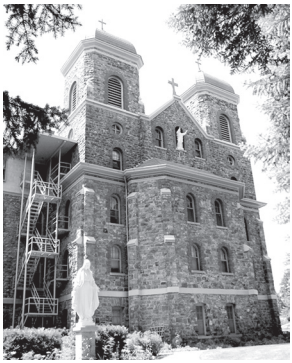
Tourism in the Riggins area has increased during the last 20 years as recreational activities such as whitewater rafting, boating, and salmon and steelhead trout fishing have become increasingly popular. The Riggins Motel remains as the town's only example of an early post-World War II motel.

***Listed**: 2001* ***Ownership**: Private*
***Location**: 615 S. Highway 95, Riggins, Idaho.*
***Photo**: Idaho State Historical Society*

21 ❧ Monastery of St. Gertrude

The Monastery of St. Gertrude, overlooking the Camas Prairie near Cottonwood, was founded by three sisters from the Benedictine Monastery in Sarnen, Switzerland. Settling first in Oregon and Washington, the sisters came to Cottonwood in 1907 and began serving as teachers and nurses.

Dedicated in 1924, the original Romanesque revival style three-story monastery sits on a raised foundation made of blue porphyry rock that was mined from the hill behind the site. The building consists of a basilican chapel and a convent wing attached on the south side. It is the only example of traditional Benedictine architecture in Idaho and the only structure in the state attributed to Engelbert Gier of Mount Angel, Oregon who designed the building and altar.



The Chapel

The chapel has two massive 97-foot high corner towers on its eastern front that can be seen for miles. These have louvered belfry openings that are capped with red-domed roofs of a Bavarian style. All of the openings are round-arched. The outset center bay holds a statue of Jesus Christ in a central niche. The chapel is seven bays long, with abbreviated buttresses forming the bays. The gabled roof terminates at both ends with a parapet gable. There is an exterior entry on the chapel's north side and its west side.

The Altar

The ornate altar inside the chapel is made of hand-carved oak whose parts were mortised, tenoned and glued together. A 27' high triple baldachin (altar canopy) resting on six pillars dominates the altar. Behind and above the altar is one of five 8 3/4' x 5 1/2' paintings changed to correspond with the church calendar.

In 1928, the altar was crafted in Sigmaringen, Germany by a Mr. Marmion, who was awarded the insignia 'Pro Papa Et Ecclesia' (for the Pope and Church) for his outstanding service in support of religious art.

The Monastery

The convent wing is nine-bays wide. All openings are round-arched except for the third story windows, which were originally dormers in a mansard roof. Over the years, the roof has been remodeled and a brick addition has been added to the south side where the entrance is today.

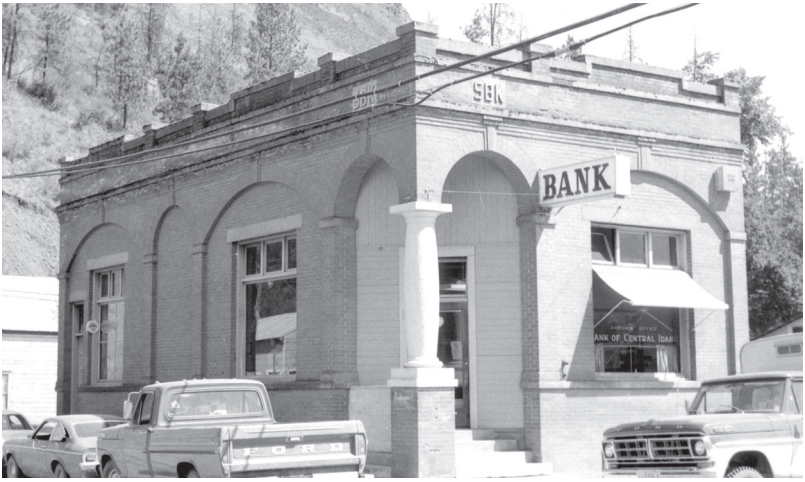
The monastery is a private residence for the sisters. The chapel can be visited daily from 9:00 – 11:30 A.M. and 12:15 – 4:30 P.M.

One of the ministries of the monastery is the Historical Museum at St. Gertrude founded by Sister Alfreda Elsensohn (1897-1989) who also wrote four books about Idaho history. Her extensive research and personal contact with historic figures of the day allowed her to record colorful and historic accounts.

The museum houses 70,000 artifacts with 11,000 on exhibit reflecting the history of north-central Idaho and the sisters of the monastery. The museum is open year around Monday through Saturday from 9:00 A.M. – 4:30 P.M.

***Listed**: 1979* ***Ownership**: Private*
***Location**: Three miles west of Cottonwood, Idaho.*
***Photos**: Idaho State Historical Society; Historical Museum at St. Gertrude*

22 ❧ State Bank of Kooskia



Built in 1912, the State Bank of Kooskia is one of the oldest banking structures in the state and is Kooskia's oldest brick building. It was designed by Ralph Loring, from Lewiston, and the masonry was completed by George Trenary, Kooskia's major contractor.

The building is compact, charming and concise, with well-crafted brickwork and an inset corner entry with stone and brick ornamentation. Inside there is an 18-foot ceiling and an old vault with inspection stickers dated 1913. In 1975, a one-story addition and new entrance was added to the building.

While Kooskia's population is only about 650, the bank served many patrons from outlying areas. The bank is now closed.

***Listed**: 1978* ***Ownership**: Private*
***Location**: 1 South Main Street, Kooskia, Idaho.*
***Photos**: Idaho State Historical Society*

Warren Guard Station Building ❧ 23

The Warren Guard Station is located in the historic town of Warren, Idaho, known for its mining and Chinese history.

The 1934 building served as the office and residence for the ranger. It was one of eleven buildings which comprised the whole of the station. An example of the "Rocky Mountain Cabin" design developed by the Forest Service, the building is an early and well-preserved Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) project. The CCC provided employment to young men during the 1930s and was responsible for the construction of 236 buildings and 91 dams in Idaho. The men also planted 28 million trees, spent over 484,000 man-days fighting forest fires, and rehabilitated over 641,000 acres of forest land.

Today, the front office of the building is a historical museum that interprets the culture of 18th century American Indians and 19th century American and Chinese miners.

***Listed**: 1994* ***Ownership**: USDA Forest Service, Payette National Forest*
***Location**: Warren, Idaho.*
***Photo**: Payette National Forest*

24 ❧ White Bird Grade

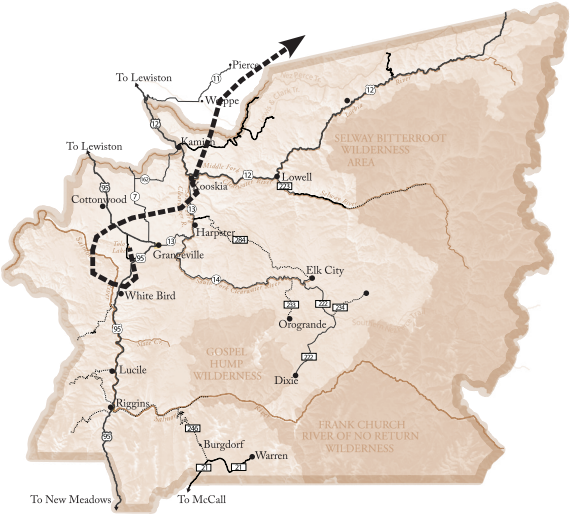
At the turn of the 20th Century, a national Good Roads Movement initiated efficient road design. The 21.1 miles of US Highway 95 from White Bird to Grangeville were constructed in 1920. No other major highway grade in the United States matched this one in the design of its switchbacks. The total cost of this first project was $363,155.

Old Highway 95 snaked up White Bird Hill in a series of sharp curves and a dozen switchbacks. The eight-mile section of the two-laned road going up the hill was originally 16-feet wide, but was widened to 18 feet in 1938. Even then, some of the switchbacks were so sharp that long trucks had to navigate them using a series of backing and forward movements. Old Highway 95 connected the north and south parts of Idaho, and the White Bird Hill was well-known as a place where traffic could slow to a trickle, even in good weather.

A new, straight grade replaced the old route in 1975, but the old road remains a monument to highway building during the early automobile era. The Old White Bird Grade is open to highway traffic and is approached by driving north through the town of White Bird or south from an access road at the top of the grade.

***Listed**: 1974* ***Ownership**: Public*
***Location**: On Old Highway 95, north of White Bird, Idaho.*
***Photo**: Idaho State Historical Society*

Nez Perce Historical Sites



The next few sites relate to the 1877 Nez Perce War. Below is a brief timeline of events in Idaho:

June 3, 1877—Nez Perce bands were encamped at *Tepahlewan*, a gathering place referring to the rugged basalt-cliffed canyon leading from the Salmon River and opening onto the Camas Prairie near what is now called Tolo Lake.

June 13, 1877—Young warriors, disturbed by the prospect of being forced away from their homelands, left the Tolo Lake encampment and killed several settlers along the Salmon River.

June 17, 1877—the Nez Perce defeated the US Army and its volunteers at the first battle of the war at White Bird Canyon.

July 1, 1877—Captain Stephen Whipple and his cavalrymen destroyed Chief Looking Glass' village at the confluence of Clear Creek and the Middle Fork of the Clearwater River.

July 11, 1877—General O. O. Howard and his soldiers, civilian volunteers, and Indian scouts discovered Chief Joseph, Chief Looking Glass, and about 740 Nez Perce men, women, and children and some 1500 horses at the mouth of Cottonwood Creek near Stites where the two-day Battle of the Clearwater ensued.

All these sites are part of the Nez Perce National Historical Park created in 1965. The park is managed by the National Park Service. For more information go to **www.nps.gov/nepe**.

25 ❧ Tolo Lake

The area stretching from Rocky Canyon to Tolo Lake was a traditional summer rendezvous of the Nez Perce Indians. It is also an important location in the events that led to the 1877 Nez Perce War.

Forced from their homelands in the spring of 1877, Nez Perce bands gathered at Tolo Lake prior to the government's deadline for resettlement onto the reservation. Three young men, angered by the situation and events within the camp, set out to avenge past wrongs against the Nez Perce people. On June 13 and 14, they raided ranches down the Salmon River, killing settlers along the way. Tribal leaders knew the actions of the young warriors had changed the delicate agreement between the Nez Perce and the military. The US Army would soon be in pursuit; the war had begun.

Today, the lake bears the name of Tolo (Too-lah), a Nez Perce woman who had befriended white settlers. When news of the 1877 Nez Perce uprising reached residents of Freedom (now Slate Creek) they constructed a stockade for protection from hostile Nez Perce. Tolo, who had joined the settlers at Freedom, made a heroic night ride to the mining town of Florence, twenty-six miles away to seek help. She returned with twenty-five well-armed miners.

Tolo Lake again achieved notoriety when Pleistocene-era fossils were uncovered in 1994 during a dredging operation. Paleontologists excavated the remains of mammoth (*Mammuthus columbi*) and bison (*Bison antiquis*) before the lake was refilled. A mammoth replica is on display at Eimers Park in Grangeville.

***Listed**: 1992* ***Ownership**: Private/Federal*
***Location**: 6 miles west of Grangeville, Idaho, is accessible via several unpaved roads from US Highway 95. Mammoth display at Pine Street and US95.*
***Photo**: Idaho State Historical Society*

White Bird Battlefield ❧ 26

White Bird Battlefield is located in the open, rolling hills and grassy knolls on the north side of White Bird Creek. At dawn on June 17, 1877, a camp of non-treaty bands of Nez Perce was attacked by the US Army, assisted by Idaho Volunteers. Anticipating the attack, the Nez Perce outmaneuvered their aggressors. When the battle ended, 34 soldiers lay dead while the Nez Perce suffered no casualties.

Afterward, Chief Joseph, White Bird, Looking Glass, and other Nez Perce leaders and their people headed for Montana Territory following the Lolo Trail. The combined bands numbered some 750 Nez Perce, including elders and children, along with fifteen hundred horses. After a 1,700-mile trek with the military in close pursuit, on October 5 the final battle was fought in Montana's Bearpaw Mountains, just short of the Canadian border. Some escaped into Canada, and many were killed in the final battle. Over 400 Nez Perce surrendered and were removed to the hot southern Plains—a landscape far different from their Northwest homeland.

A self-guided walking tour of the battlefield can be accessed just north of the town of White Bird to the west of Old Highway 95. Interpretation can also be found at the overlook along US Highway 95 at milepost 227.

***Listed**: 1974* ***Ownership**: Private/Federal*
***Location**: Overlook at milepost 227, US Highway 95. Access to site from Old Highway 95 north of the town of White Bird, Idaho.*
***Photos**: Steve Armstrong; Mary Lorish Jahn*

27 ❧ Looking Glass Camp

Looking Glass, the recognized leader of the Kam'nakka or Clear Creek Band, was born sometime around 1830. At the time of the 1877 Nez Perce War, he and his people lived on a terrace near the confluence of Clear Creek and the Middle Fork of the Clearwater River. A prosperous settlement, their village supported horses, cattle, and gardens producing foods like potatoes, corn, squash, and melons. Looking Glass convinced his people that they had nothing to gain by joining the war started by the "non-treaty" Nez Perce—they wanted no part of the brewing conflict.

Unfortunately, the actions of the US Army would change this sentiment. General Howard learned that Looking Glass would likely join the non-treaty Nez Perce, contributing warriors to their cause. Assuming this information factual, the General ordered Captain Stephen Whipple to arrest Looking Glass and his associates. Whipple stopped at Mount Idaho and enlisted 20 citizen volunteers to guide him to Looking Glass' camp. Early on the morning of July 1, 1877, Whipple and his cavalrymen approached the village. One of the Nez Perce men came out to meet them. Negotiation quickly ceased when a volunteer fired into the camp. Some 160 Nez Perce men, women, and children scattered to escape the assault. Once vacated, Whipple ordered his soldiers to destroy the village, round up the cattle and nearly 700 horses, and drive them back to Mount Idaho. The attack was disastrous, accomplishing precisely what Howard had hoped to avoid: Looking Glass had escaped and was now ready to join the non-treaty Nez Perce in their trek to Montana. He would prove to be one of their most able leaders.

Looking Glass' camp was used for centuries by the Nez Perce and later served as a farm, lumber mill, and today, the Kooskia National Fish Hatchery.

***Listed**: 1992* ***Ownership**: Federal*
***Location**: Wayside exhibit and picnic area 1.4 miles east of Kooskia, Idaho on Toll Road. There is a historical marker 3 miles east of Kooskia on US Highway 12, across the Clearwater River from the camp.*
***Photo**: Idaho State Historical Society*

Clearwater Battlefield ❧ 28

The Nez Perce defeated the US Army and its volunteers at the first battle of the 1877 Nez Perce War in White Bird Canyon on June 17. In the weeks following, Chief Joseph, joined by Chief Looking Glass, and about 740 Nez Perce men, women, and children and some 1,500 horses travelled to the South Fork of the Clearwater River and camped at the mouth of Cottonwood Creek near Stites. General Howard and his pursuing columns of soldiers, civilian volunteers, and Indian scouts discovered them there on July 11, precipitating the two-day Battle of the Clearwater. Although the battle was not decisive, both sides suffered losses. In the aftermath, the Nez Perce advanced north toward Kamiah and the Lolo Trail, bound for Montana.

A sign 0.9 miles south of Stites on State Highway 13 discusses the battle, but the fighting actually occurred on the edge of the broad plateau 0.8 miles east and 900 feet above the Clearwater. The Nez Perce camp was located to the west, across the river along Cottonwood Creek.

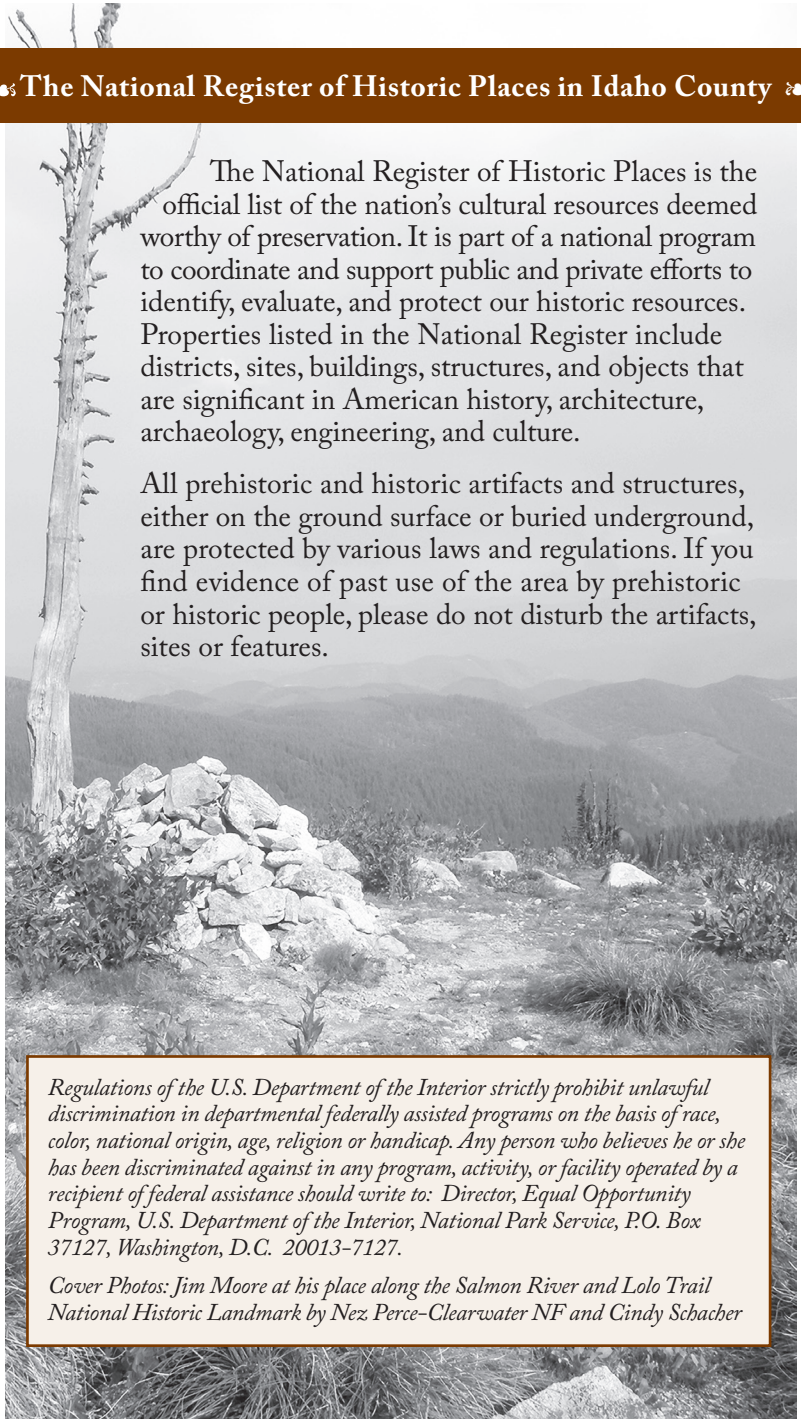
The battle site and Nez Perce camp are located on private property and closed to the public. After 130 years of agricultural use, only a few features from the battle remain: remnants of the rifle pits, low stone ramparts erected by the Nez Perce as defensive positions, the outcropping boulders of a smoking lodge used by the old men during various stages of the fighting, and a spring—a resource coveted by both sides and the focus of much gunfire. Nothing remains to identify the army encampment.

***Listed**: 1965* ***Ownership**: Private/Federal*
***Location**: 0.9 miles south of Stites, Idaho on US Highway 12.*
***Photo**: Cindy Schacher*

The National Register of Historic Places in Idaho County

The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the nation's cultural resources deemed worthy of preservation. It is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect our historic resources. Properties listed in the National Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture.

All prehistoric and historic artifacts and structures, either on the ground surface or buried underground, are protected by various laws and regulations. If you find evidence of past use of the area by prehistoric or historic people, please do not disturb the artifacts, sites or features.



Regulations of the U.S. Department of the Interior strictly prohibit unlawful discrimination in departmental federally assisted programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, religion or handicap. Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility operated by a recipient of federal assistance should write to: Director, Equal Opportunity Program, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, D.C. 20013-7127.

Cover Photos: Jim Moore at his place along the Salmon River and Lolo Trail National Historic Landmark by Nez Perce-Clearwater NF and Cindy Schacher