



United States Department of the Interior

National Park Service

Lake Clark National Park and Preserve

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March 3, 2025

Ms. Judith Bittner
State Historic Preservation Officer
Department of Natural Resources
Office of History and Archaeology
550 W. 7th Suite 1310
Anchorage, AK 99501-3561

File No. 3130-1R NPS / 2024-01110

Subject: Determination of Eligibility for Charlie Wolff Complex XLC-00295

Dear Ms. Bittner:

Thank you for your concurrence on the eligibility of the Charlie Wolff Complex for the National Register of Historic Places as a historic district at the local level for both Criterion A and C with a period of significance of 1933 to 1944.

We appreciate your noting that the porch extension of the gable roof of the Wolff Cabin was not added until after the end of the period of significance for the property. We have revised the nomination to remove this as a character defining feature.

Regarding Site XLC-00049 and its possible connection to the Charlie Wolff Complex, it appears that the site may have been mis-plotted in the original 1976 report by Smith and Shields. According to research by LACL park archeologist Jason Rogers:

Site XLC-00049 was initially recorded in 1976 by Smith and Shields, who described it thus: "This site consists of two large depressions (measuring 8m x 4m and 7.5m x 5m, with a 1m x 2m depression, probably a cellar, within each), a 3m x 3m vertical log sweatbath with the roof missing, two cache pits, and two Russian Orthodox graves. The site is estimated to date from the early 1900s." The location was described as "Approx. 40m east of Tanalian River, on the southeast shore of Lake Clark, approx 2.4km southwest of

Port Alsworth" (Smith and Shields 1977). However, the coordinates contained in the AHRS show the site to be located approximately 480m west of the river (AHRS 2025).

In 2008, a BIA survey crew attempted to locate XLC-00049 during a survey of a neighboring allotment parcel. Despite "extensive efforts" the BIA crew was unable to locate the site, and concluded that the most favorable areas for cultural deposits lie north across the Tanalian River (BIA 2009). Similarly, NPS survey conducted in 2023 was unable to locate the site (NPS 2023).

It is possible that Smith and Shields originally encountered housepits and Orthodox graves to the north and east of the river, but the site was mis-plotted in the report. Site XLC-00287 is indeed located approximately 40m east of the river, and nearby site XLC-00271 (the Tanalian Cemetery) contains Orthodox grave markers. (Rogers, 2025)

For these reasons we do not feel that XLC-00049 is related to the Charlie Wolff complex.

Thank you again for your assistance with this Determination of Eligibility.

Sincerely,

Susanne Green, Superintendent
Lake Clark National Park and Preserve

Attachments:
Charlie Wolff Complex cDOE Final

cc: (w/enclosure)
Heather Feil, Architectural Historian, AKRO Cultural Resources



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

Department of Natural Resources

DIVISION OF PARKS AND OUTDOOR RECREATION
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<http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/oha>

December 4, 2024

Susanne Green
Superintendent, Lake Clark NP&P
National Park Service
204 West 5th Avenue
Anchorage, AK 99501
Elizabeth_Rupp@nps.gov

File No. 3130-1R NPS / 2024-01110

Subject: Determination of Eligibility for Charlie Wolff Complex XLC-00295

Dear Ms. Green,

The Alaska State Historic Preservation Office (AK SHPO) received your correspondence (dated October 30, 2024) and the accompanying documentation *Charlie Wolff Complex Concurrence Determination of Eligibility* on November 12, 2024. We have reviewed the documentation in accordance with 36 CFR §60.4 and offer the following comments:

- AK SHPO concurs that the Charlie Wolff Complex is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places as a historic district at the local level for both Criterion A and C with a period of significance of 1933 to 1944.
- We agree that the Wolff Cabin (XLC-00296), Wolff Cache (XLC-00297), Wolff Smokehouse (XLC-00298) and the Wolff Root Cellar are contributing resources and that the Hanson Garage, Hanson Gazebo, and Hanson Outhouse are non-contributing resources.
- Our office recommends further consideration of the character defining features listed for some of the contributing properties. For example, the porch extension of the gable roof of the Wolff Cabin is included as a character defining feature, but it was not added until well after the period of significance.
- We encourage you to investigate AHRS site XLC-00049 that lays within the district boundary to determine if these depressions align with the Wolff Root Cellar or if they could be additional contributing resources to the Wolff Complex.
- We also encourage NPS to consider the potential archaeological resources that could be found around the root cellar and other archaeological resources identified within the site boundary identified in site XLC-00049 as potentially contributing to the district.
- A landscape approach to identification could assist in identifying additional contributing resources. The lake front access and surrounding trails seem important to the site and could assist in understanding the Wolff complex and the exploration and Pre-World War II European American settlement of Tanalian Point.

December 4, 2024
Page 2 of 2

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Please contact Amy Hellmich at 907-269-8724 or amy.hellmich@alaska.gov if you have any questions or if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Judith E. Bittner". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "B".

Judith E. Bittner,
State Historic Preservation Officer

JEB:ash

Cc: Heather Feil, Architectural Historian, AHRO Cultural Resources



Eligible X Not Eligible

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Charlie Wolff Complex

Other names: Wolff Cabin, Charles J. Wolff Cabin, Charles Wolff Cabin, Charlie Wolfe Cabin, Charley Wolff Cabin, Hansen-Wolff Cabin, Bob Hansen Cabin, #83, Wolff Smoke House, Wolff Cache, Hansen-Wolff Complex, "Hoggy" Hansen Cabin

AHRS numbers: Entire Complex XLC-00295; Contributing XLC-00296, XLC-00297, XLC-00298

FMSS Location (or Asset): 255132, 255133

CRIS-HS Number: 1172380, 1172382, 1172383

2. Location

Map sheet: USGS Lake Clark A-4, Alaska

Aliquot: Seward Meridian, Alaska, T. 1N., R. 29 W., Section 8.

Latitude: 60°11'37.84"N **Longitude:** -154°21'1.97"W

City or town: Port Alsworth, AK

Borough (or Census Area): Lake and Peninsula

Land Status: Federal

NPS Land Tract Number: LACL 08-158

Verbal Boundary Description: The parcel containing the Wolff Complex is approximately 2/5 of an acre and is just above the highwater mark on the south shore of Lake Clark. The description of the polygon boundary is generally rectangular in nature from Point A (60°11'39.14"N, -154°21'1.28"W on the highwater mark) southeast for 70 feet to Point B (60°11'38.78"N, -154°21'0.03"W) southwest for 230 feet to Point C (60°11'36.83"N, -154°21'2.30"W) northwest for 80 feet to Point D (60°11'37.21"N, -154°21'3.64"W on the highwater mark) following the highwater mark back north approximately 230 feet to Point A. This rectangle sits on the raised segment of usable land between the lake to the northwest and the deep swale to the southeast. This polygon is contained within U.S. Survey No. 5423, Alaska

Boundary Justification: The Wolff Complex sits within a small strip of usable land just above the highwater mark on the south shore of Lake Clark, this boundary contains all buildings historically associated with Charlie Wolff.

3. Description

Ownership of property: National Park Service

Category of property: District

Property's function:

Historic: DOMESTIC/Single Dwelling, AGRICULTURE

SUBSISTENCE/Processing, AGRICULTURE SUBSISTENCE/Storage,

Current: RECREATION AND CULTURE/Outdoor Recreation; VACANT NOT IN USE

Materials:

Foundation: WOOD - Logs at grade

Walls: WOOD – Saddle notched, Post and Beam

Roof: METAL – Ag-panel metal

Resource Count:

Eligible	Not Eligible	Type
3	2	Building
1	0	Site
0	1	Structure
0	0	Object
4	3	Total

Summary Paragraph:

The Charlie Wolff Complex is a small historic district on the south shore of Lake Clark within Lake Clark National Park and Preserve, which consists of four contributing resources of the **Wolff Root Cellar Site**, **Wolff Smokehouse**, **Wolff Cabin**, and **Wolff Cache**. Interspersed among these buildings and structures are three non-contributing resources of the Hansen Gazebo, Hansen Outhouse, and Hansen Garage. All resources are oriented facing the water on a small strip of usable land which has had recent (2023) tree clearing for wildfire fuels reduction.

The hub of the complex is a small 12' by 21' saddle notch cabin (**Wolff Cabin**), about 55 feet north of the cabin, is a 15' 8 " by 14' 8" 1 ½ story smokehouse sheathed with vertical planks (**Wolff Smokehouse**). Just north of the smokehouse is a depression thought to be a root cellar (**Wolff Root Cellar Site**). Between the smokehouse and the cabin is a modern 12' by 12' screened building (Hansen Gazebo). About 25 feet south of the cabin is an 8' 8" by 8' 8" raised log cache, saddle-notched, with a gable roof covered with ag-panel roofing, that is set on four spruce logs (**Wolff Cache**). A framed outhouse of recent construction, a replacement of the original log outhouse, is situated approximately 30 feet west of the cache (Hansen Outhouse). South of the outhouse is a 12' by 16' low-grade plywood sheathed garage with a gable roof (Hansen Garage).

Setting:

The parcel containing the Wolff Complex is approximately 2/5 of an acre and is just above the highwater mark on the south shore of Lake Clark approximately 650 yards southwest of the mouth of the Tanalian River in the village of Port Alsworth, Alaska. To the rear of the complex is boreal forest cut by old channels of the Tanalian River floodplain. Overall, there is little level ground beyond a narrow strip where the homesite and outbuildings are situated, interspersed with spruce, cottonwood, and birch trees.

Electricity and telephone lines extend through the property, paralleling the shoreline, servicing this and other shoreline properties.

Narrative Description:

The northern most feature is the **Wolff Root Cellar Site**, followed by the **Wolff Smokehouse**. Next comes the Hansen Gazebo followed by the **Wolff Cabin** then the **Wolff Cache**. The Hansen Outhouse and Hansen Garage are the southernmost buildings of the complex. The narrative descriptions of all resources will be separated by contributing and non-contributing resources in spatial order from north to south.

Contributing:

Charlie Wolff Root Cellar Site (CRIS-AR TBD)

Constructed Mid – 1930s

Site

The root cellar remnant consists of a U-shaped depression in the ground measuring 14' 3" long by 12'0" wide and is approximately 5' deep, with an opening on the western side. This depression was cut into the raised area of land where the entire complex rests. There are small diameter birch and cottonwood trees both within the site and along the top.

Charlie Wolff Smokehouse (CRIS-HS 1172380; XLC-00298)

Constructed 1938

Building

Exterior

The smokehouse is a 15'8" by 14'8", 1 ½ -story rectangular, front gable, wood frame pole barn/timber framed building with vertical board siding. The timber framed building with finely wrought mortise and tenon joinery. A 32" by 68" framed doorway is off-center of the gable on the southern facing elevation, a vertical board door is wedged open on the interior of the building. Centered in the south gable elevation is a modern mercury vapor street lamp. The gable roof is covered in steel ag-panel, which looks to be recently installed.

The north elevation has a small 17" by 34" frame window opening that is boarded over from the interior of the building. The east and west elevations have no fenestration. All elevations feature whip sawn and sawmill sawn vertical board siding, primarily sawmill sawn on exterior. Both board types are "plain sawn" or "flat sawn" and include the rounded log edge boards on the rear elevation.

Interior

The interior of the building is open spruce log pole with finely wrought mortise and tenon joinery construction with no insulation and an exposed modern electrical system. The floor is gravel. There is open storage in part of the ½ story.

Charlie Wolff Smokehouse Character Defining Features (CDF)

CDF Exterior

- Rectangular massing
- 1 ½ story, with gable roof with metal covering
- Whip sawn and sawmill sawn vertical board siding, primarily sawmill sawn on exterior. Both board types are “plain sawn” or “flat sawn” and include the rounded log edge boards on the rear elevation
- Lack of fenestration, single boarded up window on rear elevation

CDF Interior

- Exposed interior framing, mortise and tenon timber framing
- Open space for storage
- Bare floor

Smokehouse boards discussion

It is possible that the smokehouse was built later than the cache and cabin as it shows evidence of both whipsawn and sawmill cut boards. There are two alternative origin stories for the smokehouse planks. One was supplied by NPS historian Sara Hornberger who stated that in 1932, Floyd Denison helped Wolff whip saw planks and they built the smokehouse that year. [Ellana et al, Sociocultural, 4-40, 1986]. The other origin story put forth by NPS architectural historian Alison K. Hoagland in 1982 states that the sawed planks were milled on Charlie Denison’s steam powered sawmill in about 1938.

However, Professor Ted Karamanski who evaluated the complex in 1990 believes the kerf on the planks indicated they were whipsawn rather than sawed on a mill [Alison Hoagland, Lake Clark, Charlie Wolff Complex, 1982; Ted Karamanski, “Draft Multiple-Property National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form,” Historic Resources Study Lake Clark National Park and Preserve, Harlan D. Unrau, NPS, 1992, 723-731.]

There is evidence of both whipsawn and sawmill cut boards on the building documented during the 2024 site visit for this documentation.

Charlie Wolff Cabin (CRIS-HS 1172381, FMSS 255132; XLC-00296)

Built 1932

Building

Exterior

The cabin is one-story, has a gable-front roof sheathed in ag-panel metal roofing, is rectangular in plan, and measures a total of 21'-0" x 12'-0" and is of saddle-notched log construction. The foundation appears to consist of sill logs resting on ground, although the corners are not visible due to settling and vegetation build-up that has placed the

building closer to grade. Attached to the front of the log cabin is a 5' open extension of the gable supported with poles placed directly in the ground. This open porch area covers grass with boards laid on the ground. The rear addition, also constructed of saddle-notched logs, adds 8'7" to the cabin and has a shed roof with a built-up roof of metal ag-panel laid over top of tar paper rolled roofing. This addition is likely original to the cabin but is documented by the 1940 Census. The chinking varies between Portland cement and black tar, likely laid over the original chinking. The logs retain the original bark but due to age the bark is not extant on the entire building.

The front (northwest) elevation contains a vertical board entrance door, measuring 30" x 71", painted green which is offset to the south in the gable. The entrance door is covered with a home crafted storm door featuring two panels, the upper panel still contains a plexiglass panel while the lower panel is an open frame. A single modern window sits to the north of the door and is a 26" by 30" horizontal sliding window set within the original opening. Both the door and the window have a flat board molding painted green to match the door. Decorations on the front elevation are mountain goat horns above the entrance door and caribou antlers on the king post of the porch support.

The northeast elevation lacks fenestration in the main cabin area but includes a boarded-up door on the shed roof addition. The chimney penetrates the roof on this elevation. The stovepipe is now capped with an overturned galvanized bucket and a stone.

The southeast elevation features a small horizontal board door in the apex of the gable. Centered in the shed roof addition wall is a small 16" by 32" fixed pane window.

The southwest elevation has two fixed windows, one in the shed roof addition is 28" by 32" and the one in the main room is 36" by 42". Most windows are set in vinyl frames, with the exception the bedroom window, which is set in a wood frame.

Interior

The interior consists of two small rooms, the main cabin and the shed roof addition. The main cabin interior looks to serve both a kitchen and living space function. The shed roof addition room looks to be a small bedroom with a vanity area.

The front room has a kitchen function along the north wall with a gas stove, dry sink, countertop, and storage. The inside of the log walls in the kitchen, dining/living area are covered with white painted fabric that appears to be canvas. The floor is large wood planks covered in worn through pebble pattern vinyl sheet flooring with a black underlayer. Based off the pattern this flooring may date from the 1960s-1970s and may be asbestos containing, all the way through the 1990s and not be asbestos containing. The ceiling is only 6'3" high and is covered in one square foot plain white acoustic tiles which may contain asbestos. The stove pipe hole in the ceiling is covered in plywood. Baseboard, window, and door trim along with a peg board is painted a dark kelly green.

The shed roof addition is accessed through a green painted door frame. The floor in the shed roof addition room is bare plywood. The wall and ceiling coverings are low grade plywood (Oriented Strand Board or OSB) sheeting, some is painted and some bare. The ceiling height vaults from 4 feet to 6 feet where it connects to the front room.

Charlie Wolff Cabin Character Defining Features (CDF)

CDF Exterior

- Saddle-notched log construction
- Extended rectangular massing
- Gable roof with metal covering; shed roof addition on rear

CDF Interior

- Two small rooms, front for kitchen/dining room use, rear room for sleeping
- Painted canvas wall coverings
- Large plank flooring in the front room

Charlie Wolff Cache (CRIS-HS 1172382; XLC-00297)

Built 1932

Building

Exterior

About 25 feet south of the cabin is an 8' 8" by 8' 8" raised log cache, saddle-notched, with a gable roof that is supported by log purlins and covered in metal ag-panel roofing.

It is unknown exactly how elevated the cache was when constructed but it is now resting on failing logs capped with rusted gas can covers and almost touching the ground. It has a significant list toward the front elevation resulting in the top course of saddle-notching to no longer be seated in the notch. The vertical board access door on the front elevation will not close due to the significant angle of the front elevation. The $\frac{3}{4}$ rounded floor logs extend out the front and rear elevation and are held in place between the sill logs and the first course. The remaining elevations lack fenestration.

Interior

The interior of the cache features a single open room to be utilized for storage. The floor logs have been hewn flat and tightly spaced with high skill. All four walls are hewn flat as well with bark still evident. There is a single wood shelf along the southern elevation of the interior. The purlins and underlayment of the roofing are evident from the interior.

The interior has been weather tight since construction and is in great condition.

Charlie Wolff Cache Character Defining Features (CDF)

CDF Exterior

- Saddle-notched log construction

- Square massing
- Gable roof, likely tar paper roof original
- Vertical board door access

CDF Interior

- Exposed flat hewn log interior
- Single shelf
- Roof structure exposed

Non-Contributing:

Hansen Gazebo

Constructed 2010
Building

Between the smokehouse and the cabin is a simple single story 12'2" by 12'2" square building with a shallow gable roof. It is wood frame construction using conventional dimensional cut lumber. Foundation support is supplied by concrete pier pads, with three piers per joist. The siding of the lower half walls is plywood, the balance of the walls are plastic screening. The exposed roof trusses are covered in clear corrugated fiberglass panels.

The entry door on the southern elevation is an aluminum frame storm door. The floor is plywood, the inside of the walls is open stud. It is rough-wired and has numerous electrical outlets. This building was used for outdoor lounging that is protected from mosquitos.

Hansen Outhouse

Constructed 2000
Structure

The outhouse is a 4-foot square structure with OSB siding, a green fiberglass panel shed roof and a door made of vertical wood boards. It was built by the Hansens around 2000 after the original log outhouse became unserviceable. It situated approximately 12 feet south of the cache.

Hansen Garage (FMSS #255133)

Constructed 2010
Building

The southern most building of the complex is a one story, rectangular 16'3" by 12'3" shallow gable roof with a 7-foot overhang on the front elevation. The flooring is poured concrete. The walls and roof structure are wood frame construction using conventional dimensional cut lumber. The siding is the OSB sheeting and the exposed roof trusses are covered in clear corrugated fiberglass panels.

The front elevation features a 6-footwide by 8-foot-high metal roll-up door. The interior is open stud, it is wired and has interior lighting. The north elevation features a modern mercury vapor streetlamp which matches the one on the smokehouse.

Alongside this south elevation is a collapsed roof structure that was an awning which was destroyed by a windstorm. The roofing over it has been removed and all that is left is the frame.

Changes over time:

The original log outhouse rotted away and was replaced by a newer framed outhouse. But the three most significant buildings, the main cabin, the smoke house, and cache remain mostly unchanged, except of four recently installed single pane windows in the cabin and roofing replacements.

Chronology of the complex:

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| c.1932 | Charlie Wolff built cabin (Charlie Wolff Cabin) and possibly the cache (Charlie Wolff Cache) |
| c.1938 | Charlie Wolff built the two-story smokehouse (Charlie Wolff Smokehouse) around 1938, since it features both whipsawn and sawmill boards. Charles Denison's sawmill was introduced to the area in 1938. |
| 1940 | Charlie Wolff still listed in the 1940 Census as living at Tanalian Point in a two room cabin (Charlie Wolff Cabin) |
| c.1942 | Charlie Wolff moved to Anchorage during the war effort. |
| 1942 | Elmer Gustafson moved into the Wolff property. It is unclear whether he made improvements/changes. |
| 1944 | Elmer Gustafson moved out of the Wolff property and in with Tanalian Point resident Doc Dutton to care for Doc, after Joe Kackley died. Eventually Elmer would move to Petaluma CA but is still listed as living at the Dutton/Kackley property in the 1950 Federal Census. Dutton/Kackley were some of the additional first European American settlers at Tanalian Point. |
| 1950 | Charlie Wolff Complex Property is listed as vacant in the 1950 Federal Census. |
| c. 1952 | Jerry Burton moved into the property, referenced in the 1987 Tanalian Inc. land claim case that he lived at the property year-round for multiple years. It is possible that he lived there for more than 20 years based off a note from Hoagland's field work. There is one photograph from the 1950s which shows the cabin without the current porch extension of the roofline (Figure 4), this porch is not character defining as it dates to outside the period of significance. |

1967	Jerry Burton applied for a Homesite Land Patent on the Wolff Property from the BLM with number 058113 as of July 12, 1967.
1972	Jerry Burton sold the property (Quit Claim) to Dolly Farnsworth and her brother Frank and his wife Leedy Mynarcik.
1976	Property surveyed by BLM – US Survey No. 5423, Alaska. August 4 and 5, 1976.
1982	Dolly Farnsworth, Frank and Leedy Mynarcik sold the property to Robert and Pamela Hansen of Soldotna. Paperwork originally dated 1979 but was recorded in 1982.
Pre-1990	Between 1983 and before 1990, the multi-pane original windows were replaced by single pane windows.
Post – 1990	Likely 2000, original log outhouse replaced with a framed structure (Hansen Outhouse).
Post – 1990	Likely 2010, local acquaintance of the Hansens, Hal Lindle, built the garage (Hansen Garage) and gazebo (Hansen Gazebo).
c. 2015	New single pane windows installed at the cabin according to Hal Lindle.
2020	Property sold to the Lake Clark National Park and Preserve as recorded in 2020-000021-0 Recording District 320 – Illiamna.

4. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

Criterion A: Yes

Criterion B: No

Criterion C: Yes

Criterion D: No

Areas of significance: Exploration/Settlement, Social History

Significant date(s): c. 1930, 1943, 1975, 2020

Period of significance: c. 1930 - 1944

Level of significance: Local

Significant person(s): N/A

Cultural affiliation: N/A

Architect/Engineer: Charlie Wolff¹, with modifications and additions by Bob Hansen

¹ Throughout the historical record Charlie Wolff is referred to as “Charles Wolf”, “Charlie Wolf”, “Charlie Wolfe”, “Charley Wolf”, and oral histories refer to him Charlie/Charley Wolff. Census data, World War I draft card, passport application, and a newspaper article spell his name “Charles Wolff” however since he was known locally as “Charlie” this is the spelling utilized in this document.

Statement of significance:

The Charlie Wolff Complex is significant at a local level under Criteria A and C in the areas of Exploration/Settlement and Social History for being associated with the first pre-World War II European American settlers to Tanalian Point and for being a well-built log cabin at the dawn of the aviation era at Lake Clark. This complex of prospector-trapper Charlie Wolff and subsequent prospector-trappers to the area providing a period of significance of 1932 – 1944.

The Charlie Wolff Complex consists of the **Wolff Cabin**, **Wolff Cache**, and **Wolff Smokehouse** which retain all seven aspects of integrity of Location, Design, Setting, Materials, Workmanship, Feeling, Association. The **Wolff Root Cellar** is now an open site and has lost integrity of Materials and Workmanship. The original Wolff Outhouse was constructed of log which have since deteriorated and has been rebuilt in frame construction in 2000 and thus non-contributing in this documentation.

Historical information:*Exploration/Settlement*

The Lake Clark region is within the Bristol Bay drainage of southwestern Alaska and is characterized by a diversity of landscapes: mountains, lakes, rivers, forests, and tundra. Its abundant fish and wildlife resources attracted Native Alaskans for at least the last 11,000 years. For the last one thousand years Lake Clark has been home to the Lake Clark Dena'ina. Historically the Dena'ina lived on the millions of red salmon who annually spawned in and around Lake Clark, brown bear, Dall sheep, small game and a wide variety of berries other plants. The Dena'ina were great hunters and fishers and were prodigious hikers. They lived at a number of villages on the north shore of Lake Clark that are now collectively referred to as Kijik, now a 1,900 acre National Historic Landmark (NHL), the largest Dena'ina archeological site in North America. Following an epidemic of measles and influenza at Kijik village in 1901-1902 the survivors gradually moved away and relocated to Old Nondalton, 25 miles west of Kijik on Six Mile Lake, downstream from Lake Clark.

The first Russian explorers to visit Kijik arrived during the 1790s in a search for furs and trade with Native Alaskans. The first Americans to visit the region were government scientists and explorers between 1882 and 1891. The first European American settlers on Lake Clark were commercial fishermen and prospectors who arrived during the first decade of the twentieth century. By 1930 there were only five settlers living on or near Lake Clark, one of which was Charlie Wolff. The others being Brown Carlson, O.M. "Doc" Dutton, Jonah E. "Joe" Kackley, and Jack Hobson. Once aviation opened up access to Lake Clark in the early 1930s the settler population increased very slowly. The

early settlers during the time 1902-1942 were attracted to Lake Clark because of its abundant fish and game, forests for building materials and fuel, and glorious scenery.

Not much is known about Charlie Wolff before he came to Alaska. He was born on June 2, 1876, in Grant, Michigan [1930 *Federal Census* for Lake Clark, Alaska]. He could read and write and was a miner, a “saw mill man”, a trapper, and a Bristol Bay commercial salmon fisherman. Based on a passport application of the same name, he may have come up through Dawson in 1902 into Alaska. There is a Charles Wolff listed as a US Commissioner in Talkeetna in 1916. Wolff’s World War I draft card referenced his living in Talkeetna Alaska in 1917 and remained there in 1920 purchasing land in the Talkeetna townsite [1920 *Federal Census* for Talkeetna, Alaska].

He began living at Tanalian Point starting in 1929 [1929/1930 *Federal Census* for Tanalian Point] and probably lived in Doc Dutton and Joe Kackley’s old cabin behind their main house until he got his place built by 1932 [Hoagland, *Lake Clark*, Charlie Wolff Complex]. Wolff put up red salmon with Doc and Joe and filled his smoke house with red salmon each summer. Wolff also prospected in the Bonanza Hills with Charlie Denison, Billy Hill, and Wassillie Trefon using the portable Airplane Placer Drill to drill to bedrock on Bonanza Creek in the mid-1930s [LACL Historic Photograph H-527, H-2851, H-44, see Figures 1, 2, and 3].

Wolff lived at Tanalian Point between 1929 and approximately 1942 and is listed as living in a two-room cabin in the 1940 Federal Census for Tanalian Point. During World War II, Wolff moved to Anchorage and worked as a “night watchman” at either Elmendorf Field or Fort Richardson.² Wolff eventually worked for Morrison Knudson in Whittier Alaska where he died of a brain hemorrhage and stroke on September 2, 1947. His remains were shipped back to Grant Michigan where he is buried in the family plot. [US Commissioner Files, Anchorage estate case files]

After Wolff decamped for work in wartime Anchorage in 1942 or 1943, prospector-trapper Elmer Gustafson moved into the Wolff property. It is assumed that Gustafson bought the cabin from Wolff. There is no evidence of land ownership in Charlie Wolff’s probate file. After Joe Kackley died in 1944, Elmer Gustafson moved in with Doc Dutton to take care of him. Eventually Elmer would move to Petaluma, California but is still

² Oral histories provided a few stories that do not align with the historical record of Charles Wolff. One version noted that he was a “communist and ran off to Russia” which is unlikely in 1942. Another references that after the war, Wolff moved to Dillingham and worked at the Red Top mine cinnabar deposit. In addition, he was reported to have owned and managed a small apartment building in Dillingham. [Hornberger, *Sociocultural*, 4-40-4-41; Branson, *Lake Clark History*, 83, 95, 108, and 147] There is a second Charles A. Wolf who was part of the Territorial Guard of Alaska and lived in Dillingham and is possibly the one referenced in mining documents from 1956 as part of the Red Top Mine.

listed as living at the Dutton/Kackley residence in the 1950 Federal Census. The Wolff property is listed as vacant in the same census.

It is assumed that by 1952 Gustafson sold the Wolff property to Jerry D. Burton, although there is no record of exchange in the land records. Burton may or may not have moved into the property. However, it is referenced in the 1987 Tanalian Inc. land claim case that Burton lived at the property year-round for multiple years. There is also a note in Hoagland's field work that Burton lived there for more than 20 years and delivered the mail.

Burton applied for a Homestead Land Patent from the BLM with number 058113 as of July 12, 1967. In 1972, Burton sold the property (Quit Claim) to Dolly Farnsworth and her brother Frank and his wife Leedy Mynarcik. Dolly Farnsworth was influential in the establishment of Soldotna, a successful businesswoman, a dedicated public servant, and was deeply involved in community service and education. She was inducted into the Alaska Women's Hall of Fame in 2015 after her death. While she is an important person to Alaska history, it is unknown how much time, if any, she spent at the Wolff property.³

The Wolff property was surveyed by the Bureau of Land Management under US Survey No. 5423, Alaska on August 4 and 5, 1976 resulting in a successful patented homestead land claim. Dolly Farnsworth, Frank and Leedy Mynarcik sold the 4.99-acre property to Robert and Pamela Hansen of Soldotna. The paperwork originally dated 1979 but was recorded in 1982. Bob Hansen worked on an oil platform in Cook Inlet and was known to locals as "Hoggy" Hansen. The Hansens owned the property for approximately 40 years and used it for summer vacations before they sold it to Lake Clark National Park and Preserve in 2020.

Social History

Perhaps the single most significant factor about Wolff's life on Lake Clark was that after the initial mixture of Dena'ina and European American settlement of Tanalian Point (now known as Port Alsworth) by Doc Dutton, Joe Kackley, the Trefon Balluta family, and the Pete Anderson family in about 1910-1911 no other long term European American settlers or Natives joined them until the arrival of Charlie Wolff in 1929. Tanalian Point was a tiny hamlet of Native and non-Native people living in reciprocal hybrid subsistence lifeways, mixing traditional Dena'ina hunting, fishing, and gathering practices with outboard engines and homemade plank skiffs, shoepacks, and kerosene lamps, etc.

In 1932 Charlie Denison and his son Floyd and daughter-law, Lena, moved to Tanalian Point. Lena flew in to Tanalian Point in a floatplane in late summer 1932 thus being the

³ It is possible that her original homestead in Soldotna could be a significant location for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

first person to take up residence on Lake Clark that did not come in the old-fashioned way by boat, dog team, or on foot. Lena Denison's move to Tanalian Point was made possible by the growing role of aviation opening-up remote places in bush Alaska. No doubt when Wolff was ready to move to Anchorage seeking work in about 1942-1943, he flew from Tanalian Point and likely was flown by Babe Alsworth, Lake Clark's first resident commercial pilot. [Branson, A 20th Century Portrait of Lake Clark , 83, 95, 108, 147]

Charlie Wolff was a skilled log builder and had trapping cabins at Johnson Slough on the Chulitna River and at least one or two other cabins on the upper Chulitna River. [Martin Johnson, Sr. 3-30-94]. It is reported that Wolff had three different trapping cabins spaced 10-12 miles apart. There is also a vague report that he had a cabin on the Mulchatna River, perhaps near the Keefer Creek confluence. [Hornberger, Lake Clark Sociocultural Study, 1986, 4-40-4-41]. The fact that Wolff had a large smokehouse is consistent with the understanding of this era with salmon being abundant at Lake Clark and dried smoked salmon were widely used as sled dog food and it was via dog sled that Wolff could access his far-flung trapping cabins.

After Elmer Gustafson left the Wolff cabin to live at the Dutton/Kackley property in 1944, it is unknown if the property was ever again directly associated with the lives of pre-World War II prospector/trappers for which this property is significant for its Social History.

Application of the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) Criteria:

Criterion A - The Charlie Wolff Complex is significant at a local level under Criterion A in the areas of Exploration/Settlement and Social History for being associated with the first pre-World War II European American settlers to Tanalian Point, specifically of prospector-trapper Charlie Wolff who came to settle here in 1929.

Criterion B - The complex is not known to be associated with the lives of significant persons, and is ineligible under Criterion B.

Criterion C – The Charlie Wolff Complex is significant at a local level under Criterion C in the areas of Exploration/Settlement and Social History for being a complex of a well-built log cabin, log cache, and substantial wood plank smokehouse from the dawn of the aviation era at Lake Clark.

Criterion D - The complex is unlikely to yield further information important in understanding local, regional, or national history, and is ineligible under Criterion D.

Integrity:

The Charlie Wolff Complex consists of the **Wolff Cabin**, **Wolff Cache**, and **Wolff Smokehouse** which retain all seven aspects of integrity of Location, Design, Setting, Materials, Workmanship, Feeling, Association. The **Wolff Root Cellar Site** is now an open site and has lost integrity of Materials and Workmanship. The original Wolff Outhouse was constructed of log (documented in 1990) but has since deteriorated the Hansen Outhouse replaces it in general location and function. The additional Hansen era buildings of the Hansen Gazebo and Hansen Garage, being modern plywood structures do not detract from the integrity of the Wolff complex.

Based off oral histories and documentation in the mid-1980s, the Charlie Wolff Complex has remained in the location where it was constructed during its period of significance and retains integrity of **Location**.

The general form, massing, and design of the contributing resources has remained consistent. The **Wolff Cabin** and **Wolff Cache** feature tight saddle notching log work and the **Wolff Smokehouse** is a timber framed building with finely wrought mortise and tenon joinery. The general design of the **Wolff Root Cellar** is also understood within the exposed site. The contributing resources retain integrity of **Design**.

The **Wolff Cabin**, **Wolff Cache**, and the **Wolff Smokehouse** buildings retain the original log and sawn board exteriors. The roofs on all three buildings were replaced with ag-panel roofing panels. From oral history and documentation in the mid-1980s, the original roofs appear to have been corrugated metal. The windows on the **Wolff Cabin** have been replaced with vinyl but the fenestration patterns have not been significantly altered. The interior of Wolff cabin still retains what appears to be the original painted canvas wall coverings. The contributing buildings retain integrity of **Materials**.

The **Wolff Cabin**, **Wolff Cache**, and the **Wolff Smokehouse** buildings retain integrity of **Workmanship** of the log notching and timber framing.

Even with the interspersed Hansen buildings, the contributing resources of the **Wolff Cabin**, **Wolff Cache**, **Wolff Smokehouse**, and **Root Cellar** retain a connection to the feeling of a time or place of pre-World War II European American settlers to Tanalian Point. The contributing resources retain integrity of **Feeling**.

The **Wolff Cabin**, **Wolff Cache**, **Wolff Root Cellar** and the **Wolff Smokehouse** retain a connection to the association of being well-built log cabin homesite from the dawn of the aviation era at Lake Clark. The contributing resources retain integrity of **Association**.

Resource Table

AHRS ID#	FMSS LOCATION #	CRIS - HS	RESOURCE NAME	CONSTRUCTION DATE	RESOURCE TYPE (Building, Structure, Site, Object)	STATUS (Not Eligible, Contributing, Noncontributing)
<i>Not yet assigned</i>	n/a	n/a	Charlie Wolff Root Cellar	Mid-1930s	Site	Contributing
XLC-00298		1172380	Charlie Wolff Smokehouse	1938	Building	Contributing
XLC-00296	255132	1172381	Charlie Wolff Cabin	1932	Building	Contributing
XLC-00297		1172382	Charlie Wolff Cache	1932	Building	Contributing
n/a		n/a	Hansen Gazebo	2010	Building	Non- Contributing
n/a		n/a	Hansen Outhouse	2000	Building	Non- Contributing
n/a	255133	n/a	Hansen Garage	2010	Building	Non- Contributing

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6. **Form Prepared By:** Heather Feil, Architectural Historian, National Park Service Alaska Regional Office.

7. Additional Material

Maps:

Map 1. Topographic Map, USGS Lake Clark A-4, Alaska

Map 2. Charlie Wolff Complex Site Map, 2024

Map 3. Charlie Wolff Complex Site Map, Photo Key, 2024

Photographs:

Photograph 1. Charlie Wolff Cabin, Toward East, NPS Historic Structure Inventory Program, 2024

Photograph 2. Charlie Wolff Cache, Toward Southeast, NPS Historic Structure Inventory Program, 2024

Photograph 3. Charlie Wolff Smokehouse, Toward North, NPS Historic Structure Inventory Program, 2024

Photograph 4. Charlie Wolff Root Cellar, Toward Southwest, NPS Historic Structure Inventory Program, 2024

Photograph 5. Hansen Gazebo, Toward East, NPS Historic Structure Inventory Program, 2024

Photograph 6. Hansen Outhouse, Toward East, NPS Historic Structure Inventory Program, 2024

Photograph 7. Hansen Garage, Toward Northeast, NPS Historic Structure Inventory Program, 2024

Photograph 8. Overview of Wolff Property from Lake Clark, Toward Northeast, NPS Historic Structure Inventory Program, 2024

Photograph 9. Interior of Charlie Wolff Cache, NPS Historic Structure Inventory Program, 2024 (Interior photos not shown on photo key map)

Photograph 10. Interior of Charlie Wolff Smokehouse, NPS Historic Structure Inventory Program, 2024 (Interior photos not shown on photo key map)

Photograph 11. Interior of Charlie Wolff Cabin, NPS Historic Structure Inventory Program, 2024 (Interior photos not shown on photo key map)

Figures:

Figure 1. Charlie Wolff, Photo from LACL Historic Photo Collection, courtesy of Shelly McLeod.

Figure 2. Charlie Wolff, Photo from LACL Historic Photo Collection, courtesy of Martin Johnson.

Figure 3. Charlie Wolff, Photo from LACL Historic Photo Collection, courtesy of Martin Johnson.

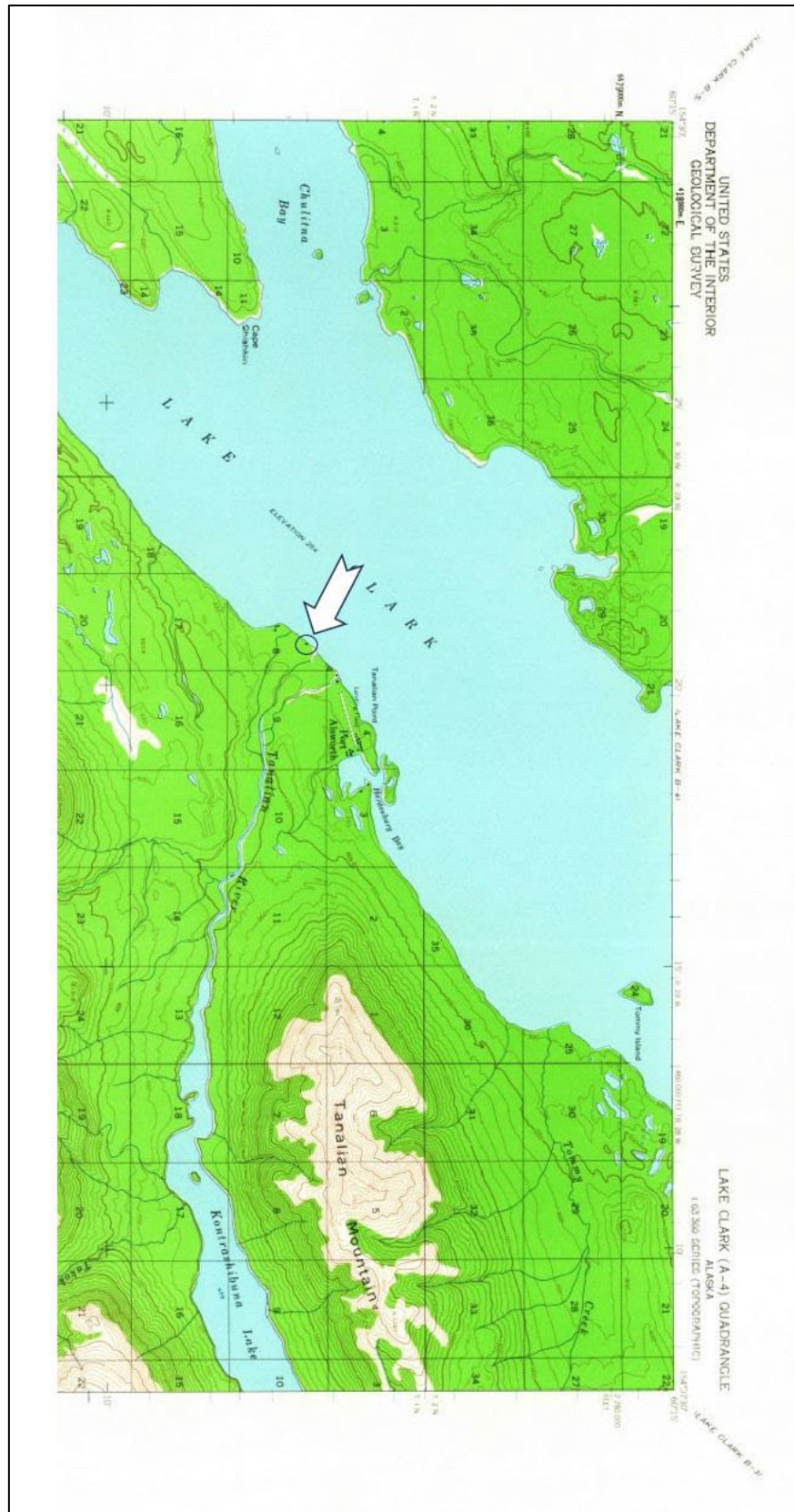
Figure 4. Charlie Wolff, LACL Historic Photo Collection, courtesy of Agnes Cusma.

Figure 5. Charlie Wolff Cabin, from LACL Historic Photo Collection, courtesy of Margaret Clum.

Figure 6. Charlie Wolff Cabin, Historic Structure Inventory 1983. LACL Archives.

Figure 7. Charlie Wolff Cache and Outhouse, Historic Structure Inventory 1983. LACL Archives.

Figure 8. Charlie Wolff Cabin, Theodore Karamanski, July 1990. LACL Archives



Map 1: Topographic Map, USGS Lake Clark A-4, Alaska, Wolff property identified.



Map 2: Charlie Wolff Complex Site Map, 2024



Map 3: Charlie Wolff Complex Site Map, Photo Key, 2024

Photographs:



Photograph 1: Charlie Wolff Cabin, Toward Southwest, NPS Historic Structure Inventory Program, 2024



Photograph 2: Charlie Wolff Cache, Toward Northwest, NPS Historic Structure Inventory Program, 2024



Photograph 3: Charlie Wolff Smokehouse, Toward North, NPS Historic Structure Inventory Program, 2024



Photograph 4: Charlie Wolff Root Cellar, Toward West, NPS Historic Structure Inventory Program, 2024



Photograph 5: Hansen Gazebo, Toward North, NPS Historic Structure Inventory Program, 2024



Photograph 6: Hansen Outhouse, Toward South, NPS Historic Structure Inventory Program, 2024



Photograph 7: Hansen Garage, Toward Northeast, NPS Historic Structure Inventory Program, 2024



Photograph 8: Overview of Wolff property from Lake Clark, Toward Northeast, NPS Historic Structure Inventory Program, 2024



Photograph 9: Interior of Charlie Wolff Cache, NPS Historic Structure Inventory Program, 2024



Photograph 10: Interior of Charlie Wolff Smokehouse, NPS Historic Structure Inventory Program, 2024



Photograph 11: Interior of Charlie Wolff Cabin, NPS Historic Structure Inventory Program, 2024

Figures



Figure 1: Charlie Wolff at Tanalian Point, 1928-1929. Frozen Lake Clark in background. Photo courtesy of Shelly McLeod. H-2851 LACL Historic Photo Collection



Figure 2: Bill Hill's Airplane Placer Drill on Bonanza Creek the winter of 1935-1936. Left to right: Charley Wolff of Tanalian Point, Martin 'Poykin' Johnson of Naknek, and Charley Denison of Tanalian Point. Pilot Roy Dickson flew parts of the drill from Seversen's Roadhouse to the Bonanza Hills; other parts were hauled to Bonanza Creek by several dog teams from Nondalton. The drill was used to reach to bedrock. Photo courtesy of Martin Johnson. H-527, LACL Historic Photo Collection



Figure 3: Charlie Wolff in the Bonanza Hills, winter of 1935-1936. He trapped on the Chulitna River, he had a cabin on the south side of the Tanalian River in the 1930s. He prospected for gold with Billy Hill, the Trefons, and Charlie Denison in the Bonanza Hills in the winter of 1935-1936. Photo courtesy of Martin Johnson. H-1008 LACL Historic Photo Collection.



Figure 4: Left to right: Otis M. "Doc" Dutton, Joe Kackley, and Charlie Wolff on the shore of Lake Clark near Doc and Joe's cabin, early 1930s. They are processing salmon on a cutting table covered with spruce bark that prevents the fish from slipping around. The fish bin is made of spruce poles and planks, and there are two spruce plank boats in the picture. Photo courtesy of Agnes Cusma. H-44, LACL Historic Photo Collection.



Figure 4: Unknown woman at Charlie Wolff's cabin in the 1950s. Note the large amounts of driftwood washed up near the high-water mark on the beach. Photo courtesy of Margaret Clum. H-2065, LACL Historic Photo Collection.



Figure 6: Charlie Wolff Cabin, Lake Clark Cabin Inventory, 1983. LACL Archives



Figure 7: Charlie Wolff Cache and Outhouse, Lake Clark Cabin Inventory, 1983. Note cache was sitting approximately 3 feet off the ground. LACL Archives



Figure 8: Charlie Wolff Cabin, Theodore Karamanski, July 1990. LACL Archives