

SITKA

Administrative History



Sgt. John J. McLean, U.S. Signal Service (right), Assistant Paymaster Edwin B. Webb, U.S. Navy, ca. 1885, on Indian River bridge.
(Fickett Collection, University of Alaska Anchorage Archives)

An Administrative History of SITKA NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

By
Joan M. Antonson
William S. Hanable

1987

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PREFACE

In 1985 Sitka National Historical Park celebrated 75 years as a national monument and national park, an anniversary predating that of the National Park Service itself. Yet its history as a public park goes back even further to its designation by President Benjamin Harrison in 1890. The government's foresight in preserving the historic site is manifest to anyone visiting this gem of green at the mouth of Indian River where a battle was fought and a land lost.

The Tlingit Indians have always called this land home. In a pitched battle in 1804 they withdrew from the Sitka area, leaving it to the Russian fur-traders, who founded their New Archangel on the nearby point, now downtown Sitka. Later, the Tlingit returned to Sitka after agreements tacit and verbal, living somewhat in harmony with the intruders, with occasional outbursts. Americans took over from the Russians in 1867, by which time Indian River had become a destination point for walks and reflection. By the 1880s, park-like developments had been introduced at Indian River park and, after the turn-of-the-century, totem poles were introduced as attractions to visitors.

As this report explains, these resources continue to be management issues: maintenance of a trail, of totem poles, and a memorial site for the Battle of Sitka. The interaction of the community with the park and the Native groups is well detailed in the report; including the 1930s-1950s debate on appropriate site management." An Indian cultural center was established in the park in 1966 to add a new dimension and to show the dynamic, living culture of the Natives of Southeast Alaska.

Shifts in management of the park at Sitka have corresponded with the changing views of historic preservation and park management philosophy. In 1910, the park was a memorial site, but management allowed "development" in the form of hasty reconstructions and displays unacceptable by today's standards. A change in philosophy and a more direct involvement of the National Park Service (which didn't have a ranger on site until 1940) forced the agency to ask questions about the management and even retention of Sitka as a park unit. Archeological evidence relocating the historic fort site and the efforts to involve Natives with the interpretation of their art and culture highlighted the new effort to legitimize the park resources. This thrust as well as international events brought about an expansion of the park and the restoration of the Russian Bishop's House.

In 1972, Sitka National Monument was expanded and redesignated Sitka National Historical Park, which included the Russian Bishop's House. The Russian Bishop's House, the best remaining example of Russian American architecture in the United States and a symbol of the Russian culture's interaction with Native groups, has been restored to its ca. 1854 appearance. The project has been a long, difficult one and is discussed at length in the report.

This office believed that a history of the discussion of these issues and the changing philosophy of 75 years of management would help park managers understand past decisions and help anticipate future concerns. Direct stimulus for this report was the need for information about the establishment of the national monument, which would aid in the

adjudication of water rights issues at Indian River. Thus, the Alaska Region contracted with historians William S. Hanable and Joan M. Antonson in 1986 to prepare such a history. They have done an exceptional job. Their history will help other park or historic site managers to see how far preservation in Alaska has come.

Robert L. Spude
Regional Historian
Alaska Region

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Chapter 1: DESCRIPTION OF THE RESOURCE

INTRODUCTION

Overview

This section describes the area now known as Sitka National Historical Park. It discusses its geographic location, environment, component resources such as Indian River, the Indian fort site, the battleground, the Russian sailors' memorial, the totem poles, the cultural center, the Russian Bishop's House, the Russian blockhouse, recreational usage, and their values, and the significance assigned to those values. It examines the intent of executive and congressional actions taken in the 1890s and early 1900s to reserve the area.

Geographic location

Sitka National Historical Park lies adjacent to, and because of "outholdings" such as the Russian Bishop's House and the Russian blockhouse, actually in, the Southeastern Alaska fishing and lumber processing port of Sitka.

Sitka, with its population of approximately 8,000, is the largest community on the west coast of 1,607-square-mile Baranof Island. It is also the fourth largest community in Alaska. It is 95 air miles southwest of Juneau, 185 air miles northwest of Ketchikan, 590 air miles southeast of Anchorage, and almost 900 air miles north of Seattle. [1]

Physical Environment

Although it lies on the eastern edge of the North Pacific Ocean, Sitka is sheltered from the



Indian River, before 1882.

(H.H. Brodeck photo, Sheldon Jackson Collection, #2115, Presbyterian Historical Society)

violence of those waters by Sitka Sound. Around Sitka is the rainforest-like vegetation typical of Southeastern Alaska. This dense growth of Sitka spruce, western hemlock, and Alaska cedar rises to timberline on the steep slopes of the Baranof Mountains. Various berry bushes, devil's club, and other undergrowth form a dense cover for the forest floor. Alpine tundra is found above treeline, typically around 2,000 feet.

Moisture-laden clouds moving in from the ocean dump about 97 inches of precipitation, including 50 inches of snow, on Sitka each year. This heavy, but sporadic, rain and snowfall is complemented by strong south or southeasterly winds with average annual speeds of eight to ten knots. Temperatures range from the 40s to the 60s in summer and from the teens to the low 40s in winter.

Natural wildlife found in the Sitka area includes bear, deer, mink, and otter. Other wildlife that has been introduced by human intervention includes mountain goats, martens, and squirrels. Sea mammals, such as sea otter, were once plentiful in the Sitka vicinity but were hunted to near extinction in the nineteenth century. Other sea mammals such as harbor seals, sea lions, porpoises, and several species of whales have survived in the waters near Sitka. Ocean fish indigenous to the Sitka area include sockeye, chum, pink, and coho salmon and numerous types of bottom fish. Fresh water fish in the area include steelhead, rainbow, cutthroat trout, and Dolly Varden. Other sea life nearby includes Dungeness, tanner, and king crab; clams, scallops, abalone, sea urchins, octopus, and sea cucumbers. [2]

Cultural Environment

The Sitka area is historically the location of a large Tlingit Indian year-round village. That complex and rich culture was supplemented and impacted by Western culture in the late eighteenth century when Russian fur traders arrived both to trade and later to occupy the area. The Battle of Sitka, commemorated by the park, in fact resulted in the Kiksadi Tlingits leaving the Sitka area for some twenty years. The Kiksadi eventually returned to Sitka at the invitation of the Russians. The Russians themselves were later supplanted by Americans who arrived in October of 1867 to occupy the Russian posts there and in other areas of Alaska.

Thus Sitka's cultural environment is a mixture of Tlingit, Russian, and American cultures. That mixture is reflected in the variety of resources that have been identified over the years in what is now Sitka National Historical Park.

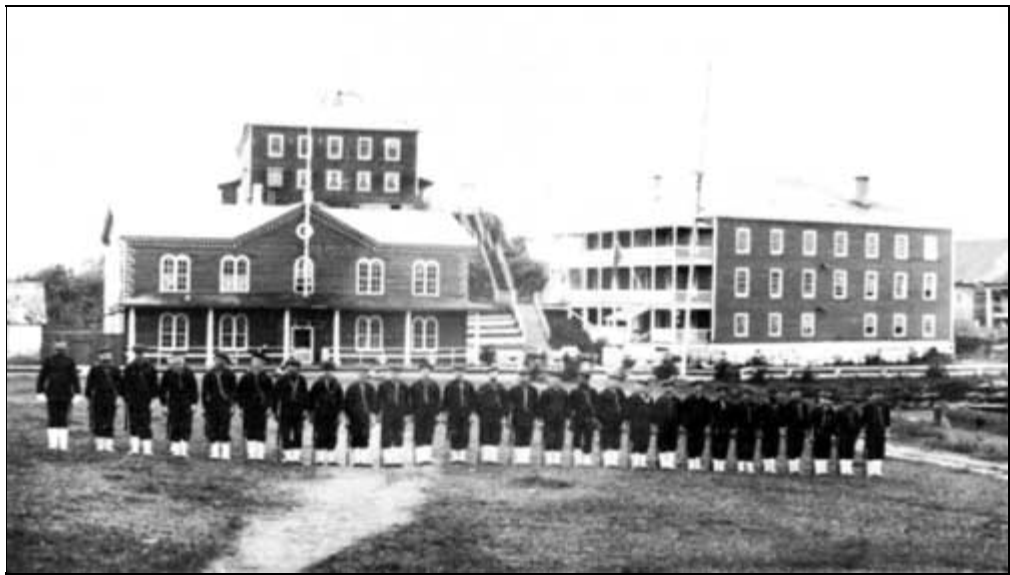
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Chapter 2: SITKA -- HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

OVERVIEW



Far left, 2d Lt. Howard H. Gilman, U.S. Marine Corps, with his Marine detachment from USS Adams on parade ground at Sitka. Gilman led the effort to construct recreational trails at Indian River before he left Sitka in August 1884.

(Sheldon Jackson Collection, #500, Presbyterian Historical Society)

This section briefly outlines the history of the community of Sitka. It provides a context for understanding the evolution of what is now Sitka National Historical Park. It includes a description of traditional Tlingit use of the area around Sitka before the Russians established a fort in the area. The battles of 1802 at Old Sitka and of 1804 at Indian River are detailed. Understanding the different national approaches to fulfilling government responsibilities in Alaska is necessary to understand changes at Sitka from the Russian period to the American period. Understanding the nature and remoteness of Sitka and Alaska is also necessary to understanding the development of the park.

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Chapter 3: SITKA NATIONAL MONUMENT, EARLY YEARS

INTRODUCTION



Lovers Lane at Sitka National Monument, ca. 1935.
(Photo courtesy of Anchorage Museum of History and Art, #B75.134.61)

Overview

This section treats the years between 1910, when a presidential proclamation designated the park as a historical monument, and 1940, when the first National Park Service employee arrived to staff the park. The period encompassed General Land Office custody of the park between 1910 and 1916, National Park Service assumption of responsibility in 1916, and a variety of subsequent management approaches. Significant additions to the park resources during the period included donation of a replica Russian blockhouse by Sitka residents.

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Chapter 4: SITKA NATIONAL MONUMENT, MIDDLE YEARS

INTRODUCTION

Overview

This section treats pre-World War II management of the park including preparation of the first master plan for Sitka National Monument, the Civilian Conservation Corps-U.S. Forest Service project to restore or recarve totems at the park and from other areas of Alaska, the war years when park service personnel had only limited access to areas of the park being used by the U.S. Army and the U.S. Navy, and the post-war years through 1959.

The period included removal of inholders from the park boundaries, efforts to obtain government housing for park personnel, war-related gravel dredging operations at the mouth of Indian River, erection of coastal defense installations within the park, navy efforts at river bank erosion control, and an expanded man date for park personnel to investigate and document historic properties throughout Sitka. The post-war period included debates over integrity of the park, when it was contemplated returning the area to local jurisdiction if the Indian fort site Could not be located by archeological examination, and possible removal of the totem poles as exotic to the park location; archeological verification of the fort site in 1957; discussions regarding treatment of the fort site, battlefield, river, replication and rehabilitation of totem poles, and the vistas from the park; and renewed consideration of establishing Sitka as a "Williamsburg of the Sub Arctic."

Other events falling into this period include assumption of maintenance of Sitka National Cemetery by park personnel, permission for operation of an asphalt hot plant on the east site of Indian River and subsequent burial of asphalt within park boundaries and reforestation, renewed gravel dredging at the mouth of Indian River, and razing of the Russian blockhouse



**Totem walk at Sitka National Monument,
ca. 1935.**

(Photo courtesy of Anchorage Museum of History and Art, #B80.50.30)

replica donated to the park in 1926.

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Chapter 5: SITKA NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK, 1966-1986

INTRODUCTION

Overview

This section treats events of the last twenty years, from 1966 to 1986. It includes a discussion of the creation of Sitka National Historical Park in 1972 that incorporated the monument property and added the Russian Bishop's House. Following completion of the visitor center, park staff began interpretation programs that included the Southeast Alaska Indian Cultural Center, an outgrowth of a Native arts program at Sitka sponsored by the Board of Indian Arts and Crafts, U.S. Department of the Interior. The addition of the Russian Bishop's House expanded the values that the park commemorated to include the Russians in North America.

The changing context

In January 1966, Sitka's Saint Michael's Cathedral, one of few remaining structures built by the Russians in North America, burned. This disaster jolted Alaskans to recognize how few properties remained from the area's colonial past. At the same time, Alaskans were planning celebrations to commemorate the centennial of the purchase of Alaska by the United States from Russia. A few years later, in 1969, Atlantic Richfield Company discovered a rich oil field at Prudhoe Bay in northern Alaska. People recognized that Alaska would change rapidly.

Simultaneously, the National Park Service was becoming more involved with historic and urban parks. Residents of the United States were undertaking projects to celebrate the nation's bicentennial. Increased attention was focused on the past and preserving evidences of it. In 1966, Congress passed the National Historic Preservation Act. The act expanded the National Register of Historic Places and provided grant funds and later tax credits to encourage preservation, restoration, and adaptive re-use of historic structures.



Aerial view of Sitka, July 9, 1965. Sitka National Monument is at the top of the photograph.

(Photo courtesy of the Office of History and Archaeology, Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation)

In 1971, Congress passed the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. Section 17(d)(2) of this act directed the Secretary of the Interior to study Alaska's federally-managed lands for possible designation as national parks, monuments, forests, wild and scenic rivers, and wildlife refuges. Nine years later, in 1980, Congress used the studies as the basis for the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act. This act classified more than 100 million acres of Alaska lands in 36 federal areas as parks, refuges, and other national conservation system units. About forty percent of the land became part of the national park system. The National Park Service operations in Alaska expanded to fifteen administrative units that included scenic, scientific, cultural, and recreational areas and properties. As units statewide and staffs at the units grew, the Alaska Area Office at Anchorage became the Alaska Regional Office.

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Sitka Historical Society Files, Sitka.

Sitka National Historical Park Files, Sitka.

University of Alaska, Anchorage, Archives

Governors Chronological File, Alaska Territorial Government, Roll No. 1, Call No. 80-12, in University of Alaska, Anchorage, Archives.

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APPENDIX A:

Chronology of Significant Documents/Key Legislation

<u>Documents and/or Legislation</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Result</u>
<u>Commissioners Recommendations</u>	04/01/1890	set aside public park	recommendation
<u>Governor's/Secretary of Interior's Recommendations</u>	06/09/1890	set aside public park	proclamation
<u>Presidential Proclamation (unnumbered) by Benjamin A. Harrison</u>	06/21/1890	set aside public park	Indian River Park
<u>Presidential Proclamation No. 959 by William H. Taft (36 Stat. 2601)</u>	03/23/1910	establish Sitka National Monument	Sitka National Monument
<u>Presidential Proclamation No. 2965 by Harry S.Truman (66 Stat c22)</u>	02/25/1952	add in-holdings to monument	additions
<u>An act to authorize certain additions to the Sitka National Monument in the State of Alaska and for other purposes PL 92-501 (86 Stat. 904)</u>	10/18/1972	add Russian Bishop's House, redesignate as national historical park	Sitka National Historical Park

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APPENDIX B: Copies of Significant Documents/Key Legislation

Commissioners Recommendation

Henry E. Haydon
Clerk,
Ex-Officio Secretary and
Treasurer.

District of Alaska
Clerk's Office

Sitka, April 1st, 1890

Hon. Lyman E. Knapp
Governor of Alaska

Sir:-

I have the honor to hand you herewith the report of the Commissioners appointed by you to designate certain lands in Sitka and its vicinity which in their judgment should be reserved for public uses.

Very respectfully
Your obedient servant
Henry E. Haydon.

Hon. Henry E Haydon
Sitka Alaska

Dear Sir-

Please find enclosed report of the Commissioners appointed by His Excellency the Governor of Alaska February 1st 1890 for the purpose of designating what grounds and buildings should be reserved by and for the use of the government of the United States.

Also a map kindly made for the Commissioners by Mr. Edwin Chamberlain Deputy United States Collection of Customs at this Port. We had no surveyors compass or instruments by which a perfectly correct survey could

be made. But the measurements are correct and the boundaries are plainly marked so that no mistakes need be made by any one. The numbers on the map point out the buildings correctly and the red lines show the boundaries of the reservation.

Hoping that this will be satisfactory to His Excellency and beneficial to all the people of Alaska.

I remain
Yours Respectfully
James Sheakley

Wrangell March 28 1890

(copy)

Hon. Lyman E. Knapp,
Governor of Alaska

Sir:-

The Commissioners appointed by you on February 1st, 1890, "to examine and report as to what lands in and about Sitka Alaska should be permanently reserved by the Government for its uses, for public buildings, barracks, parade grounds, parks, wharves, coaling stations or other purposes defining and describing the same and indicating the purposes for which they should be reserved," have the honor to make the following report.

We were confronted at the outset with one difficulty. There is, at this time no land surveyor in Sitka, and we anticipated some trouble in locating such property as we might wish to designate for reservation, but it was agreed between us, at our first meeting, that the "map of settlement at New Archangel Sitka accompanying a letter from General Lovell H. Rousseau dated December 5th, 1867 with inventories, published in House Executive Document No 125, 40th. Congress 2d. Session, signed by Alexis Pestchouroff Russian Commissioner, and Lovell H. Rousseau, United States Commissioner, copies of which documents, certified by Honorable F.F. Bayard Secretary of the Clerk of the United States District Court here, should be used by us in making reservations and designating the same, and their limits, as far as it was possible to do so. With the aid of these documents we have been able to locate and designate definitely, all of the public buildings, and much of the land described by us in this report, as desirable for reservation.

It is recommended by the Commissioners that the property designated on the certified Map and inventories as a "Wharf", together with the Warehouse Marked No 1, being on the approach to the said Wharf, be reserved to the Government for its uses, and for the legitimate uses and privileges of the residents of Sitka generally.

It is recommended by the Commissioners that the buildings designated on the Map and inventories as No 3 and No 15 be reserved for the following

purposes viz; No 3 as a Coal Shed for Naval Vessels: - No 15 as a Store house for Naval supplies during such time as it may be necessary for said Buildings to be so used.

It is also recommended by the Commissioners that all of the land covered and included in the following description be reserved for a Custom House or such other purpose as may be deemed necessary for the public service viz:

Commencing at a point thirty feet from the North West Corner of Building designated on Map and inventories as No 6 thence along Lincoln Street to low water mark in the Bay; thence following the shore line at low water mark in a South Easterly direction to a point outside of a rocky point running into the Bay; thence in a North Easterly direction to a point at right angles from the place of beginning; thence in a North Westerly direction to the place of beginning on Lincoln Street. Meaning to include with other land, all of these lots designated on the Map by Numbers 2, 3, and 5 and part of lot No. 4.

It is recommended by the Commissioners that the plot of ground marked No. 20 on the map but more particularly described as follows:-commencing at the Northern corner of that plot of ground, which we hereafted ask shall be reserved as a public Common, and now known as the "parade ground," near the Presbyterian Church and running North 33° East 64,68 feet thence West 35° North 59,73 feet, thence North 39° East 87,79 feet, to a road 26,40 feet wide crossing this and continuing the line (N 39° E.) 59,40 feet; thence East 39° South 104,28 feet, thence South 30° West 46,20 ft to a road 26,40 feet wide, thence on South side of said road East 30° South 86,64 feet, thence South 29° West 111,54 feet, thence West 4° North 150,40 feet to point of starting, for a Marine or Military barracks and garden. Provided, however, that within three years from the date of this report a building shall be erected at the expence of the United States upon said land for the occupation of said Marine or Military force, and if not erected within that time then this reservation if made, to be abandoned and the land to become part of the public domain, subject to entry and purchase as may be provided by any Land Laws then in force in this district.

It is also recommended by the Commissioners that all of that plat of ground bounded on the North West side of Lincoln Street from Warehouse designated No. 1 on Map and inventories and along Lincoln Street and the shore line to the Southern Corner of the fence enclosing House designated No 24 on the Map and inventories, thence along the walk in a North Westerly direction fronting Lot No 20, and Government School No. 2, to the North West Corner of Plat designated on the Map and inventories No 18, thence in a South Westerly direction to Water front, most of which is now known as the parade ground hereafter set apart and reserved as a public common.

It is also recommended by the Commissioners that all that plat of ground designated on Map and inventories as No 103 now occupied in part by United States Government School No 1 be reserved for school purposes. Also for like purposes, that plat of ground described as follows:-beginning at the South East corner of Lot designated on Map and inventories as No 18 in a North East direction to the North West Corner of plat marked "I" on

Map and inventories, thence in a South East direction to the South West Corner of Said plat marked "I", thence in a South Westerly direction to a line of the land asked herein to be reserved as a public common upon which is United States Government School No 2.

It is also recommended by the Commissioners that the Block House marked "C" on Map on inventories by reserved for public services including a space of ground One hundred feet square surrounding the same.

Also the Block House marked "D" on said Map and inventories including a space of land described as follows: beginning at a point on the North West corner of the street running East and West from the House now occupied by the Governor Cemetery, thence North 50° West 660 feet West 36° South 363 feet, to be reserved for public buildings for the civil service.

It is also recommended by the Commissioners that the land upon which were situated the buildings designated on the Map as Nos. 116, 117 and 118 and more particularly described as follows: to wit: Commencing at a point 28 feet from the North West Corner of the main building situated on American St. now occupied by Rueben Albertson as a Hotel and running thence in a Northerly direction 123 feet to the line of a street or road, thence along said street or road 224 feet in an Easterly direction to certain fence posts, thence South Easterly 109 feet to the line of an old fence, thence in a Westerly direction 197 feet to the place of beginning, to be reserved for a Governors House or such other occupancy as may be deemed best by the general Government.

Also ten acres of land including that now designated on the plat of land as surveyed and claimed by Rev. Sheldon Jackson for the Presbyterian Board of Home Missions as the same appears of record in the office of the Recorder Ex Officio for this district, and marked "Military Cemetery", and more particularly described as follows: to wit: beginning at Corner marked No VIII on said plat, running North Westerly 660 feet, thence North Easterly 660 feet containing ten acres more or less, to be reserved for a Military and Naval Cemetery.

In connection with this reservation we would recommend that the road leading to said cemetery from Lincoln Street be made straight at a continuous width of 50 feet from the fence forming the Western line of the lands enclosed by the Presbyterian Mission.

We would also recommend for reservation as a public park all that plat of ground, bounded on the West by the line as established by the survey made for the Presbyterian Mission, as above referred to, and along the shore line of the Bay at low tide to the mouth of the Indian River, and across the mouth of said River, along its right bank for an average width of 500 feet along said bank, to the point known as Indian River Falls: and also on the left bank of said river from said falls; an average width of 200 feet from said falls to the Eastern line or boundry as shown on the Mission plat.

Also all of that stream of water, running into Jamestown Bay on the South side thereof, on Baranoff Island now used for watering purposes by the United States Navy, and Mercantile Vessels:-and that 250 feet on each side of said stream be reserved for a wharf, and such other purposes as may be

necessary for the Naval and Marine of the United States, and that this reservation be so made that the water, of said stream, nor any part thereof shall be directed from its original channel for any private enterprise.

We would also recommend that all of that Island situated directly opposite the town of Sitka, known as "Japonsky" Island be reserved for Naval and Military purposes. This Island on account of its location, the depth of water surrounding it, and its other natural advantages, is peculiarly adapted for Government uses.

In connection with this recommendation, we would suggest, that any party who now has permanent improvements upon the Island, be remunerated for any loss sustained by reason of its being reserved and occupied for the purpose above set forth, such remuneration to be estimated upon the apparent value of such improvements as the same may appear at the date of this report. Your Commissioners believe that at this time the maximum value of such improvements do not exceed One thousand Dollars.

We have the honor to be with great respect.

Your obt. servants
Henry E. Haydon
O.W. Farenholt U.S. Navy
John G. Brady
Commissioners

Sitka Alaska
March 31, 1890.

Governor's/Secretary of Interior's Recommendation

DEPARTMENT OF THE
INTERIOR.
WASHINGTON.

J.B. McN.

3721-1890.

The President:

Sir:

I have the honor to transmit herewith a communication from the Governor of Alaska, dated April 2, 1890, enclosing the several reports of commissioners appointed by him to examine and report as to what lands in and about Sitka, Juneau, Douglas Island, and Fort Wrangel should be permanently reserved by the government for its uses for public buildings, barracks, parade grounds, parks, wharves, coaling stations, etc., and recommending that the reservations therein reported upon be made. These reports were made in accordance with the suggestion from this Department, that it be ascertained what tracts are needed by the government and for what purposes, and that the Governor communicate his views to the need of the department having control of the matters for which the proposed reservation is to be made, in view of the possibility that Congress may at the present

session extend the public land laws over Alaska.

I approve of the recommendations of the Governor with three exceptions. He recommends that Lots 1,2,3,7 and 8 in Block 7, Juneau, and all of Block "C" in said town, be set aside for garrison purposes; but it is stated by the commissioners that these tracts were declared by the district court for the district of Alaska, to have been reserved for garrison purposes by the Navy Department. If this be true it will not be necessary to declare a further reservation of these tracts. But it appears that there are certain settlers on these tracts, and the commissioners recommend that they be paid for their improvements placed thereon in good faith. In this connection I call attention to the "Act providing a civil government for Alaska," (25 Stats., 24) which provides in section eight that Indians or other persons in said Territory "shall not be disturbed in the possession of any lands actually in their use or occupation or now claimed by them but the terms under which such persons may acquire title to such lands is reserved for future legislation by Congress." This enactment would seem to debar the Executive from taking any action calculated to disturb any such settlers, and, if the tracts had not been reserved for naval purposes, would furnish sufficient reason for disapproving this recommendation of the Governor.

The Governor recommends that Lots 7 and 8, in Block 9, as per plat of G.C. Hanus, Juneau, be reserved for courthouse and jail purposes, and that a certain unnumbered block on the north side of Douglas City be reserved for like purposes. As it appears these tracts are in possession of settlers the recommendation is disapproved. He recommends that certain tracts in Sitka be reserved for a marine or military barracks, on condition that the United States shall erect certain buildings thereon. This reservation I suggest be made without condition. The reservation for a military cemetery, as recommended by the Governor, seems to be "claimed" for the Presbyterian Board of Home Missions. The nature of the claim is not stated. However as Congress has provided in said act of May 17, 1884, supra, that land in said Territory occupied as a missionary station shall be continued in such occupancy, to the extent of 160 acres for each such station, until further action by Congress, I am of opinion this reservation should be declared, subject to the rights of said Board of Home Missions therein.

I therefore recommend that the following described tracts of land be reserved from settlement and disposal and set apart for the purposes hereinafter mentioned:

Juneau and Douglas City.
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In the town of Juneau, all that tract or block numbered 23, as per plat of said town made by G.C. Hanus, except Lots 5 and 6, for public school purposes; the island, called Juneau Island, situated in Gastineaux Channel, opposite the town of Douglas City, as a coaling station and government wharf; the unnumbered block on the north side of the town of Douglas City, upon which is situated the public school building, for public school purposes.

Fort Wrangel.

In the town of Fort Wrangel, a tract of land, containing about four acres, upon which are the buildings now occupied by the civil government, and embraced in the following description: Beginning on the south side of Main street, at the northwest corner of the warehouse occupied by Sylvester and Reid; thence in a northwesterly direction by lands occupied by Rufus Sylvester, two hundred and ten feet to a post in picket fence; thence in a northeasterly direction along said picket fence, old Stockade Block House and lands occupied by Rufus Sylvester, two hundred and fourteen feet to a post; thence in a northwesterly direction at a right angle with aforesaid line by lands of the United States, two hundred and forty feet to a post; thence in a southwesterly direction and parallel with the northwest wall of the old Fort and forty feet distant from said wall by lands of the United States, five hundred and fifty feet to low tide water-mark; thence along low tide water-mark in a southeasterly/direction by the sea, four hundred and fifty feet, to the south side of Main street; thence along south side of Main street to place of beginning.

Sitka.

The following tracts in the town of Sitka, designated by numbers hereinafter referred to as they appear on the map of the settlement at New Archangel, Sitka, accompanying a letter from General Lovell H. Rousseau, Commissioner for the United States, and Alexis Pestchouroff, Commissioner for Russia, published in House Executive Document No.125, 40th Cong., 2nd Session, to wit:

The property designated as a "Wharf," together with the Warehouse marked No.1, situated on the approach to said wharf, for the legitimate uses and purposes of the public.

Also that tract of land described as follows: Commencing at a point thirty feet from the northwest corner of Building designated on map and inventories as No. 6, thence along Lincoln street to low water-mark in the Bay; thence following the shore line up low water-mark in a southeasterly direction to a point outside of a rocky point running into the Bay; thence in a northeasterly direction to a point at right angles from the place of beginning; thence in a northwesterly direction to the place of beginning on Lincoln street, meaning to include with other land all of those lots designated on the map by numbers 2,3, and 5, and part of lot number 4, for a custom house, and other uses in the collection of customs.

Also the plot of ground marked No. 20 on the map but more particularly described as follows: Commencing at the northern corner of that plat of ground which we hereafter ask shall be reserved as a public common, and now known as the "parade ground," near the Presbyterian Church, and running North 33° East 64.68 feet, thence west 35° north 59.73 feet, thence north 39° east 87.79 feet, to a road 26.40 feet wide, crossing this and continuing the line (north 39° east) 59.40 feet; thence east 39° south 104.28 feet, thence south 30° west 46.20 feet to a road 26.40 feet wide, thence on south side of said road east 30° south 86.46 feet, thence south 29° west 111.54 feet thence west 4° north 150.40 feet to point of starting, for a marine or military barracks and garden.

Also all of that plot of ground bounded on the north west side by Lincoln

street from Warehouse designated No.1 on map and inventories and along Lincoln street and the shore line to the southern corner of the fence enclosing House designated No.24 on the map and inventories; thence along the walk in a northwesterly direction fronting Lot No.20, and Government school No. 2, to the northwest corner of plot designated on map and inventories No. 18; thence in a southwesterly direction to Water front, most of which is now known as the parade ground, for a public common.

Also that plot of ground designated on said map as number 103, now occupied in part by government school number 1, and the plot of ground described as follows: beginning at the southeast corner of Lot designated on map and inventories as No.18, in a northeast direction to the northwest corner of plot marked "I" on map and inventories; thence in a south-east direction to the southwest corner of said plot marked "I"; thence in a southwesterly direction to line of the land herein to be reserved as a public common, for school purposes.

Also the Block House marked "C" on map and inventories, for public services, including a space of ground one hundred feet square surrounding the same.

Also the Block House marked "D" on said map and inventories, including a space of land described as follows: beginning at a point on the northwest corner of the street running east and west from the House now occupied by the Governor and the road leading north from said street to the Russian Cemetery; thence north 50° west 660 feet west 36° south 363 feet, south 50° east 660 feet, east 36° north 363 feet, for public buildings for the civil service.

Also the land upon which were situated the buildings designated on the map as Nos. 116, 117, and 118, and more particularly described as follows, to wit: Commencing at a point twenty-eight feet from the northwest corner of the main building, situated on American street, now occupied by Rueben Albertstone as a Hotel, and running thence in a northerly direction one hundred and twenty-three feet to the line of a street or road; thence along said street or road two hundred and twenty-four feet in an easterly direction to certain fence posts; thence southeasterly one hundred and nine feet to the line of an old fence; thence in a westerly direction one hundred and ninety-seven feet to the place of beginning, for a Governor's House, or such other occupancy as may be deemed best by the general government.

Also ten acres of land, including that now designated on the plat of land as surveyed and claimed by Rev. Sheldon Jackson for the Presbyterian Board of Home Missions, as the same appears of record in the office of the Recorder ex officio, for this district, and marked "Military Cemetery," and more particularly described as follows, to wit: Beginning at corner mark No.VIII on said plat, running northwesterly six hundred and sixty feet; thence at right angles southwesterly 660 feet, thence southeasterly 660 feet, thence northeasterly six hundred and sixty feet, containing ten acres more or less, for a military and naval cemetery, subject to any rights which said Board of Home Missions may have.

Also two hundred and fifty feet of land on each side of the stream of water running into Jamestown Bay on the south side thereof on Baranoff Island

now used for watering purposes by the United States navy and mercantile vessels, for a wharf, and such other purposes as may be necessary for the uses of the United States navy and mercantile marine; also all of that island situated directly opposite the town of Sitka known as Japonsky Island for naval and military purposes.

The tract of land bounded on the west by the line as established by the survey made for the Presbyterian Mission, and along the shore line of the Bay at low tide to the mouth of Indian River, and across the mouth of said river and along its right bank for an average width of 500 feet, along said bank to the point known as Indian River Falls, and also on the left bank of said river from said Falls, an average width of 200 feet, from said Falls to the eastern line or boundary as shown on the Mission plat, for a public park.

Herewith I enclose a copy of the opinion of the Assistant Attorney-General for this Department touching the legal points involved, which meets with my approval.

Very respectfully
Secretary

**Presidential Proclamation (unnumbered)
by Benjamin A. Harrison, 06/21/1890**

June 21st, 1890.

In accordance with the recommendation of the Secretary of the Interior, the above-described tracts of public land in the Territory of Alaska are hereby reserved for the uses and purposes indicated by the Secretary, until otherwise directed by Congress.

Presidential Proclamation No. 959

No. 70. Sitka National Monument

Establishment: Proclamation (No. 959) of March 21, 1910 Page
. 299

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF
AMERICA
A PROCLAMATION

[No. 959—Mar. 23, 1910—36 Stat. 2601]

WHEREAS, within the limits of the public park created by proclamation June 21, 1890, near Sitka, Alaska, is located the decisive battle ground of the Russian conquest of Alaska in 1804, and also the site of the former village of the Kik-Siti tribe, the most warlike of the Alaskan Indians; and that here also are the graves of a Russian midshipman and six sailors, killed in the conflict, and numerous totem poles constructed

by the Indians, which record the genealogical history of their several clans, and

WHEREAS, under the general laws of Alaska it has been found difficult to prevent vandalism within the reserved area,

NOW, THEREFORE, I, William H. Taft, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the power vested in me by Section two of the Act of Congress approved June 8, 1906, entitled, "An Act for the Preservation of American Antiquities", do hereby set aside, subject to any vested right, as the Sitka National Monument, a tract of land near Sitka, Alaska, situated within, or chiefly within, the public park which embraces the mouth of Indian River and adjacent territory, created by proclamation of June 21, 1890 the same being more definitely located and described as follows:

Beginning at corner No. 2 of the Presbyterian Mission site on the easterly side thereof; thence north twenty-four degrees, fifty-four minutes east, along the line of said mission tract, crossing Indian River, to a point seven chains and fifty-eight links from the right bank of said river; thence south forty two degrees east, thirty-three chains and eighty-five links, to a point north fifty-one degrees, thirty minutes east, ninety-one links from a post on high tide line designated "Haleys Initial Post"; thence south fifty-one degrees, thirty minutes west, crossing the mouth of Indian River to a pine tree on Indian Point; thence following the meanders of the high tide line of Sitka Bay southwesterly and northwesterly to the place of beginning; embracing approximately fifty-seven acres of land, as shown upon the diagram hereto attached and made a part of this proclamation.

Warning is hereby expressly given to all unauthorized persons not to appropriate, injure or destroy any feature of this National Monument, or to locate or settle upon any of the lands reserved by this proclamation.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

[SEAL]

DONE at the city of Washington this 23rd day of March, in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and ten, and of the Independence of the United States the one hundred and thirty-fourth.

WM. H. TAFT.

By the President:
P. C. Knox,
Secretary of State.

Presidential Proclamation No. 2965

c22

[66 STAT.]

PROCLAMATIONS—FEB. 25, 1952

REDEFINING THE BOUNDARIES OF THE SITKA
NATIONAL MONUMENT ALASKA

February 25, 1952
[No. 2965]

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF
AMERICA

A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS errors have been discovered in the description of the area now constituting the Sitka National Monument, Alaska, as contained in Proclamation No. 959 of March 23, 1910 (36 Stat. 2601), establishing the said monument; and

WHEREAS a certain tract of land adjoining the said monument has been donated to the United States to provide a suitable entrance to the monument, and a certain tract of public land near the monument is needed for the administration thereof ; and

WHEREAS certain privately-owned lands adjoining the said monument are needed for the administration and protection thereof, and the United States desires to acquire such lands for such purposes and

WHEREAS it appears that it would be in the public interest to redefine the boundaries of the Sitka National Monument (1) to correct, the above-mentioned errors of description, (2) to add to the monument the said tract donated to the United States and the said tract of public land, and (3) to include within the boundaries of the monument the said privately-owned lands, with a view to making such lands parts of the monument upon acquisition of title thereto by the United States:

Sitka National
Monument.
Boundaries

NOW, THEREFORE, I, HARRY S. TRUMAN, President of the United States of America, under and by virtue of the authority vested in me by section 2 of the act of Congress approved June 8, 1906, 34 Stat. 225 (16 U. S. C. 431), do proclaim that, subject to valid existing rights, (1) the lands now owned by the United States within the exterior boundaries of the following-described tracts of land shown on the diagram attached hereto and hereby made a part hereof shall constitute the Sitka National Monument, and (2) the privately-owned lands within such boundaries shall become

parts of the monument upon acquisition of title thereto by the United States:

TRACT No. 1

Beginning at corner No. 1, M. C., of U. S. Survey No. 1258, which is corner No. 2 of U. S. Survey No. 407, Tract B, on the west shore of Baranoff Island on Sitka Bay, Alaska, at mean high tide, in latitude 57° 02' 45" N., longitude 135° 19' 56" W., from which U. S. R. L. M. No. 1 bears N. 79° 08' 10" W., 3,965.61 ft. distant.
From the initial point,
With U. S. Survey No. 407, Tract B, meanders of Sitka Bay,
S. 72° 42' W., 236.28 ft.,
N. 60° 18' W., 153.78 ft.,
S. 73° 34' W., 39.38 ft. to east line of Kelly Street, as delineated on Mission Plat Addition to Town of Sitka dated June 14-21, 1923, produced southerly;
Thence with street lines as delineated on said Mission Plat Addition to Town of Sitka, and, as enumerated hereinafter,
Along east line of Kelly Street, produced southerly,
N. 20° 21' E., 51.41 ft. to south line of Lincoln Street,
Along south line of Lincoln Street,
S. 80° 44' E., 97.12 ft.,
S. 89° 58' E., 140.09 ft. to east line of Metlakahtla Street,
Along east line of Metlakahtla Street,
N. 23° 46' E., 528.47 ft. to south line of a road leading to Indian River,
Along south line of said road,
N. 71° 06' E., 190.66 ft., more or less;
Thence leaving the said road, with northeast line of Lot 1, Block IV of aforementioned plat,
S. 28° 49' E., 22.85 ft., more or less, to a point in the west line of U. S. Survey No. 1258 and east line of U.S. Survey No.407, Tract B;
Thence with the exterior boundaries of U. S. Survey No. 1258 to the hereinafter enumerated corners,
N. 25° 18' E., 513.34 ft., crossing Indian River to corner No. 6,
S. 42° 00' E., 1,805.10 ft. to corner No.7,
S. 30° 00' E., 673.86 ft. to corner No. 8, M. C., at mean high tide of Sitka Bay;
Thence with the meanders of Sitka Bay,
N. 65° 38' W., 123.42 ft..
N. 10° 00' W., 142.56 ft.,
N. 76° 54' W., 66.00 ft.,
S. 9° 21' w., 88.44 ft.,
N. 52° 08' W., 224.40 ft.,
S. 71° 50' W., 234.96 ft.,
S. 12° 45' W., 85.80 ft.,
S. 39° 28' E., 169.62 ft..
S. 9° 13' E., 62.04 ft.,
S. 59° 51' W., 204.60 ft.,
N. 82° 45' W., 328.68 ft.,
s. 59° 49' W., 364.32 ft.,
N. 67° 35' W., 67.98 ft.,
N. 37° 35' W., 359.04 ft.,
N. 24° 17' W. , 448.14 ft.,
N. 15° 25' W., 292.38 ft..
N. 30° 54' W., 284.46 ft. to corner No. 1 , M. C., the place

of beginning. The tract as described contains 53.454 acres, more or less.

TRACT No. 2

Beginning at corner No. 6 of U. S. Survey No. 2545, which is corner No 9 of U. S. Survey No. 407, Tract B, corner No. 2 of U. S. Survey No. 1473, corner No. 4 of U. S. Survey No. 1804, and corner No. 1 of U S. Survey No. 1558, from which U. S. R. L. M. No. 1 bears S. 66° 28' 53" W., 3,170.64 ft. distant, and corner No. 1, M. C., of U. S. Survey No. 1258 bears S. 26° 08' 06" E., 2,241.36 ft. distant. From the initial point with south line of U.S. Survey No. 2545 and north line of U. S. Survey No. 1804, this line being north line of Observatory Road, so-called, N. 15° 45' W., 35.74 ft., more or less, to the true point of beginning, thence N. 60° 22' W., 260.00 ft.; Thence leaving south line of U. S. Survey No. 2545 and continuing along north line of said road, N. 32° 38' W., 105.00 ft., Thence leaving the said road. N. 70° 22' E., 213.60 ft. to a point, in the west line of U.S. Survey No. 1558; Thence with the west line of U. S. Survey No. 1558, S. 15° 45' E., 300.01 ft.. to the true point of beginning. The tract as described contains 0.880 acres, more or less.

36 Stat., Pt. 2, p. 2601.	The said Proclamation No. 959 of March 23, 1910, is amended accordingly.
3 CFR. 1943 Cum. Supp., p. 984.	Executive Order No. 8854 of August 16, 1941, reserving the lands comprising the said Tract No. 2 and other lands for the use of the U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, Department of Commerce, as a magnetic and seismological observatory site, is hereby revoked as to the lands comprising the said Tract No. 2.
Supervision and management.	The Director of the National Park Service, under the direction of the Secretary of the Interior, shall have the supervision, management, and control of this monument, as provided in the act of August 25, 1916, ch. 408, 39 Stat. 535 (16 U. S. C. 1-3), and acts supplementary thereto or amendatory thereof. Warning is hereby expressly given to all unauthorized persons not to appropriate, injure, destroy, or remove any feature of this monument and not to locate or settle upon any of the lands thereof. IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the United States of America to be affixed.

[SEAL]

DONE at the City of Washington this 25th day of February in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and fifty-two, and of the Independence of the United States of America the one hundred and seventy-sixth.

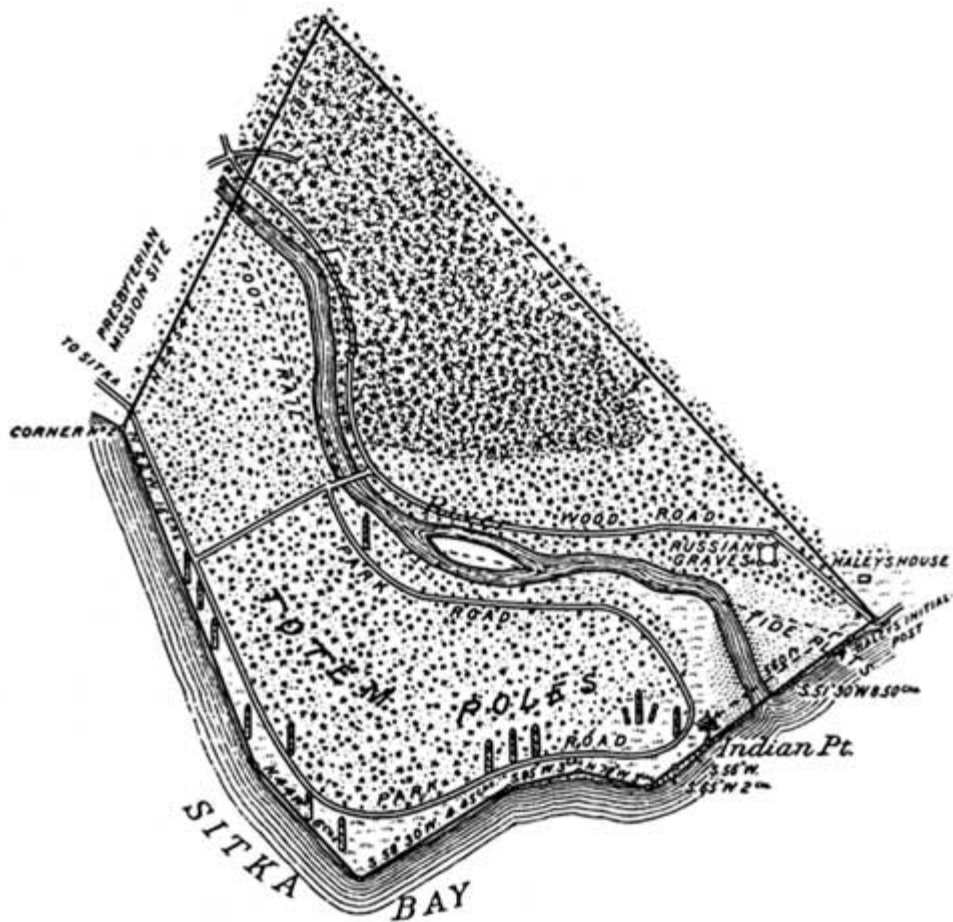
HARRY S TRUMAN

By the President:
JAMES E. WEBB
Acting Secretary of State.

SITKA NATIONAL MONUMENT

ALASKA

Embracing a tract of land which includes the mouth of Indian River and adjacent territory near Sitka, containing about fifty seven acres.



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GENERAL LAND OFFICE
Fred Dennett, Commissioner

Public Law 92-501

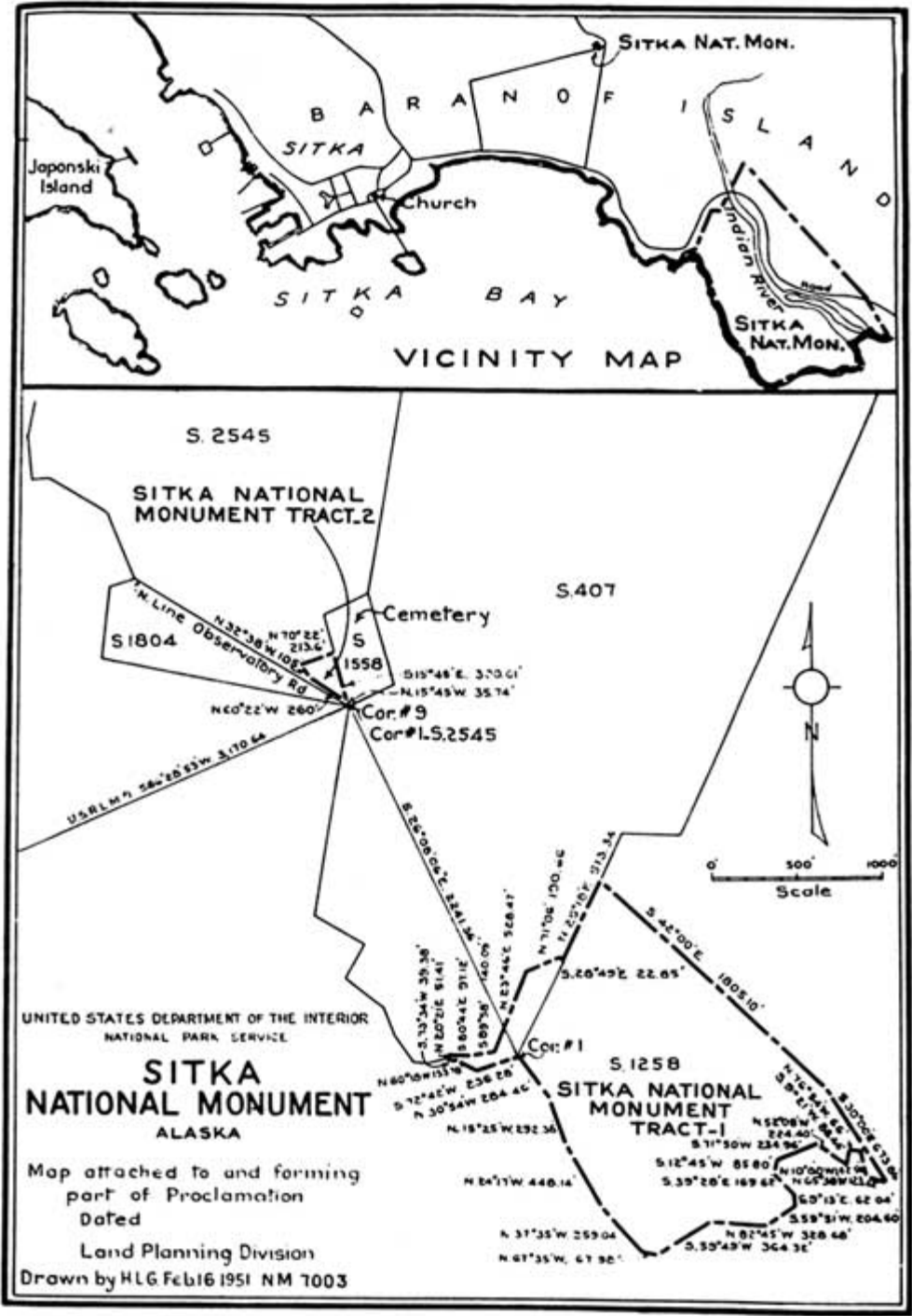
October 18, 1972
[S. 1497]

AN ACT
To authorize certain additions to the
Sitka National Monument In the
State of Alaska, and for other
purposes.

Sitka National Monument, Alaska.	<i>Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assemble,</i> That in order to preserve in public ownership for the benefit and inspiration of present and future generations of Americans an area which illustrates a part of the early history of the United States by commemorating czarist Russia's exploration and colonization of Alaska, the Secretary of the Interior (hereinafter referred to as the "Secretary") is authorized to acquire by donation, purchase or exchange, for addition to the Sitka National Monument, the lands and interests therein, and improvements thereon, including the Russian mission, as generally depicted on the map entitled "Proposed Additions, Sitka National Monument, Sitka, Alaska" numbered 314—20,010—A, in two sheets, and dated September 1971, which shall be on file and available for public inspection in the offices of the National Park Service, Department of the Interior. Lands and interests in lands within such area owned by the State of Alaska or any political subdivision thereof may be acquired only by donation. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary may erect permanent improvements on lands acquired by him from the State of Alaska for the purposes of this Act.
Additional lands; name change.	
Administration.	SEC. 2. The Sitka National Monument is hereby redesignated as the Sitka National Historical Park, and it shall be administered, protected, and maintained by the Secretary in accordance with the provisions of the Act of August 25, 1916 (39 Stat. 535; 16 U.S.C. 1, 2-4), as amended and supplemented, and the Act of August 21, 1935 (49 Stat. 666; 16 U.S.C. 461 et seq.).
Appropriation.	SEC. 3. There are hereby authorized to be appropriated not to exceed

\$140,000 for land acquisition and \$691,000 (June 1971 prices) for development, plus or minus such amounts, if any, as may be justified by reason of ordinary fluctuations in construction costs as indicated by engineering cost indexes applicable to the types of construction involved herein.

Approved October 18 , 1972.



(click on image for an enlargement in a new window)

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sitk/adhi/adhiab.htm
Last Updated: 04-Nov-2000

SITKA

Administrative History



APPENDIX C: Boundary And Other Maps

<u>Map</u>	<u>Date</u>
<u>Indian River Park</u>	
<u>Proposed Sitka National Monument</u>	1892
<u>Sitka National Monument</u>	11/12/1908
<u>Sitka National Monument Restoration Plan</u>	03/23/1910
<u>Sitka National Monument Additions</u>	07/05/1945
<u>Sitka National Monument Excavation plan</u>	02/25/1952
<u>Sitka National Monument Proposed and existing gravel operations</u>	1958
<u>Sitka National Monument Erosion Control Project</u>	05/04/1960
<u>Sitka National Monument Additions</u> - Sheet 2	09/26/1961
<u>Sitka National Monument Additions</u> - Sheet 1	

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APPENDIX D:

Key On-Site Managing Personnel, 1910 to 1940

<u>Person</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>	<u>Title</u>
Merrill, Elbridge Warren	*	Custodian
Trierschield, Peter	11/10/22-07/09/37	Custodian
Trierschield, John	08/23/37-01/23/40	Custodian

*Merrill was offered an appointment as custodian in 1918 and apparently did some work at the monument for which he received payment, but never returned the necessary appointment forms and thus was never officially on Park Services rolls.

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APPENDIX E: Key NPS Personnel, 1940 to Present

<u>Person</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>	<u>Title</u>
Miller, Ben C.	1940-1947	Custodian
Pearson, Grant H.	1947-1949	Custodian
Miller, Ben C.	1949-1953	Superintendent
Schmidt, Henry B.	1953-1957	Superintendent
Hall, George A.	1959-1963	Park Historian
Warner, Charles W.	1963	Park Historian
Ingersoll, William T.	1964-1966	Park Historian
Geerdes, Raymond	1966-1968	Park Historian
Kuehn, Daniel	1969-1973	Superintendent
Ruesch, Vernon	1973	Superintendent
Lang, Ellen H.	1974-1978	Superintendent
Edelstein, Susan	1978-1980	Superintendent
Suazo, Ernest	1980-present	Superintendent

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APPENDIX F:
Visitor Statistics (in thousands)

1913	10.0	1950	6.7
1914	12.0	1951	7.0
1915	10.0	1952	4.8
1916	10.0	1953	10.9
1917	NA	1954	11.1
1918	NA	1955	9.4
1919	NA	1956	10.4
1920	NA	1957	11.3
1921	NA	1958	12.8
1922	NA	1959	15.7
1923	NA	1960	15.5
1924	NA	1961	15.6
1925	NA	1962	13.6
1926	2.5	1963	18.8
1927	3.0	1964	21.5
1928	3.0	1965	25.8
1929	3.5	1966	38.6
1930	3.0	1967	44.8
1931	8.0	1968	23.8
1932	6.5	1969	39.5
1933	1.4	1970	61.9

1934	5.0	1971	45.0
1935	7.0	1972	38.0
1936	6.7	1973	48.0
1937	4.5	1974	64.0
1938	5.0	1975	77.0
1939	5.0	1976	81.6
1940	5.0	1977	87.2
1941	9.6	1978	86.1
1942	8.8	1979	72.1
1943	4.3	1980	75.6
1944	4.6	1981	90.5
1945	4.1	1982	90.8
1946	2.6	1983	88.3
1947	2.7	1984	112.2
1948	9.3	1985	121.1
1949	6.5	1986	114.6

NA = Not Available

Source: Humphrey, Donald W., Acting Chief, Division of Long Range Planning, National Park Service, January 18, 1973, to Project Leader, Alaska Task Force, National Park Service; File H2621, "Superintendents Annual Reports," at Sitka National Historical Park.

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APPENDIX G: Itemization of Management Plans

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National Park Service

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APPENDIX H:
Operating Budgets Since 1938
(by Fiscal Year, in thousands)

1938	.62	1970	NA
1939	.70	1971	NA
1940	2.90	1972	NA
1941	NA	1973	NA
1942	NA	1974	NA
1943	NA	1975	NA
1944	NA	1976	NA
1945	NA	1977	NA
1946	NA	1978	NA
1947	NA	1979	NA
1948	NA	1980	NA
1949	NA	1981	90.0
1950	NA	1982	325.1
1951	NA	1983	NA
1952	NA	1984	432.5
1953	NA	1985	514.9
1954	NA		
1955	NA		
1956	NA		
1957	NA		

1958	NA
1959	NA
1960	NA
1961	NA
1962	NA
1963	NA
1964	NA
1965	NA
1966	NA
1967	NA
1968	NA
1969	NA

NA = Not Available

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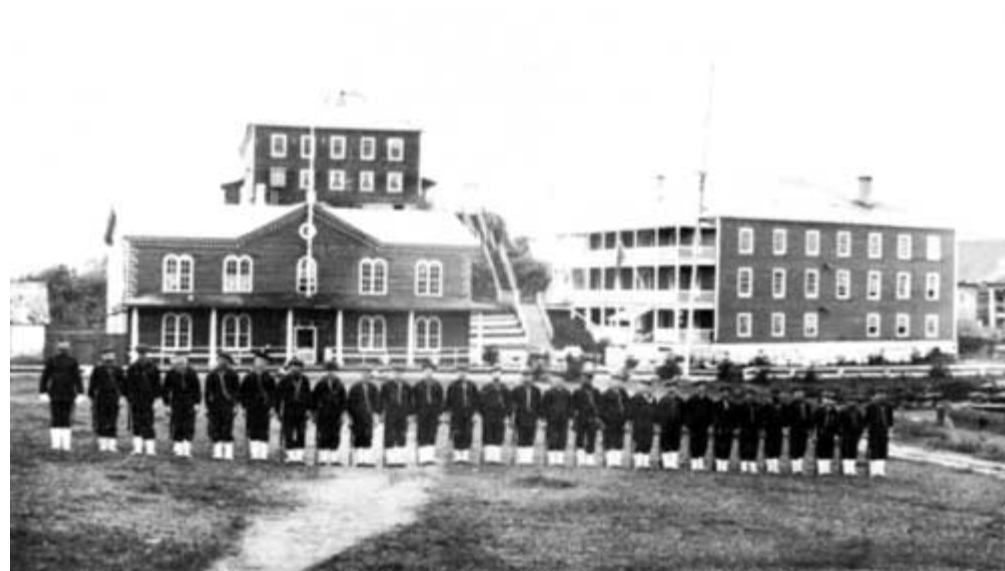
APPENDIX I: Dates, Locations, Acreages of Boundary Changes

<u>Event</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Location</u>
Designation as public park	6/21/1890	Unknown	-
Desgination as national monument	3/23/1910	53.45	-
Withdrawl for administrative headquarters site	2/25/1952	.88	1 mi. n. monument boundary
Purchase	6/02/1953	1.10	west boundary
Purchase	5/20/1954	.19	west boundary
Hobson purchase	2/09/1955	.19	entrance area
Bailey purchase	8/03/1955	.12	entrance area
Zuboff purchase	5/28/1956	.12	entrance area
Littlefield purchase	8/20/1963	.172	entrance
Designation as national historical park with additions	10/18/1972	1.369	Lincoln Street

Source: "Master plan for preservation and use of Sitka National Monument." February 15, 1962, Volume III, in files of Park," (summary of reservation history), April 24, 1986, in File A2623, Sitka National Historical Park.









25 INDIAN RIVER BRIDGE, SITKA













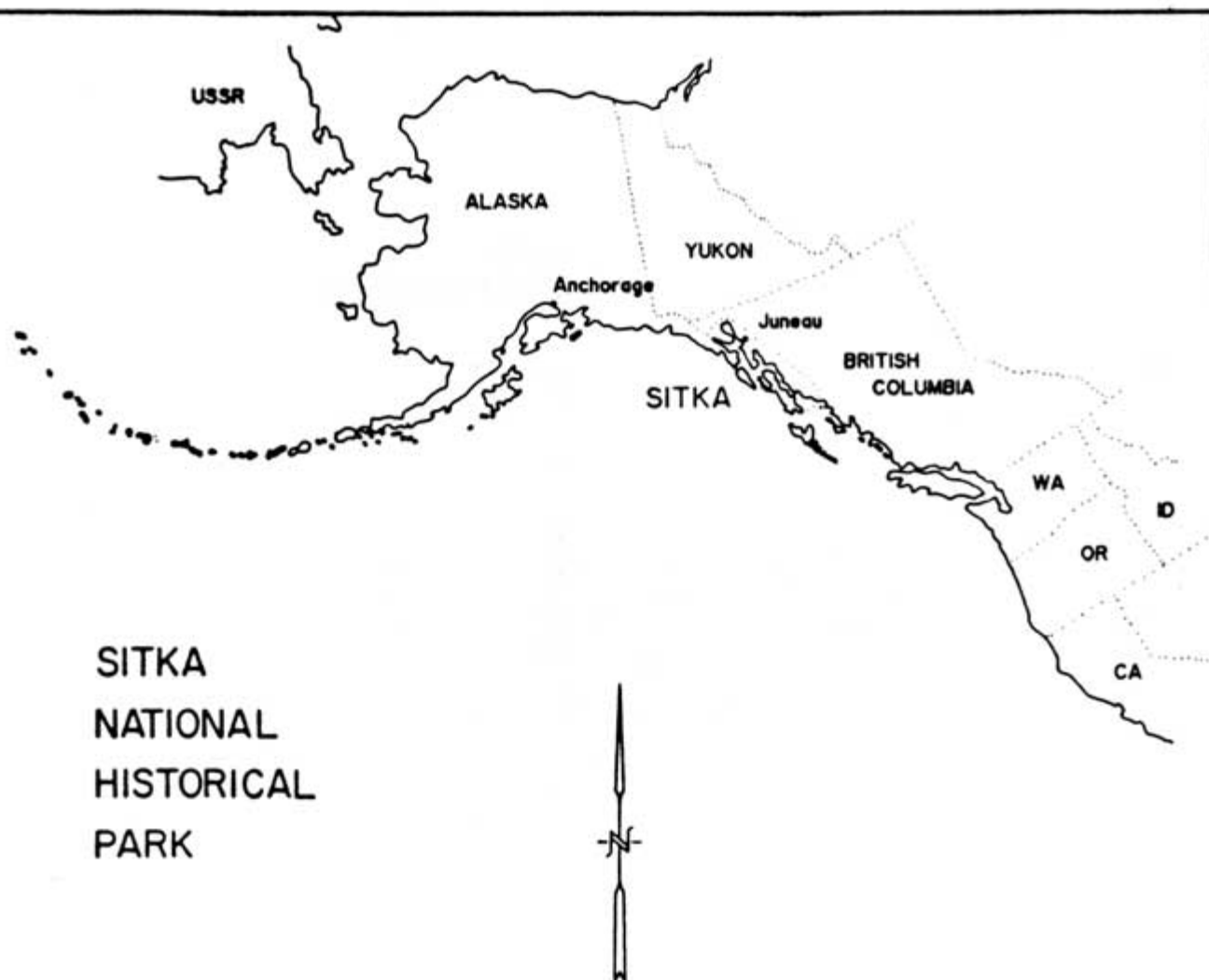




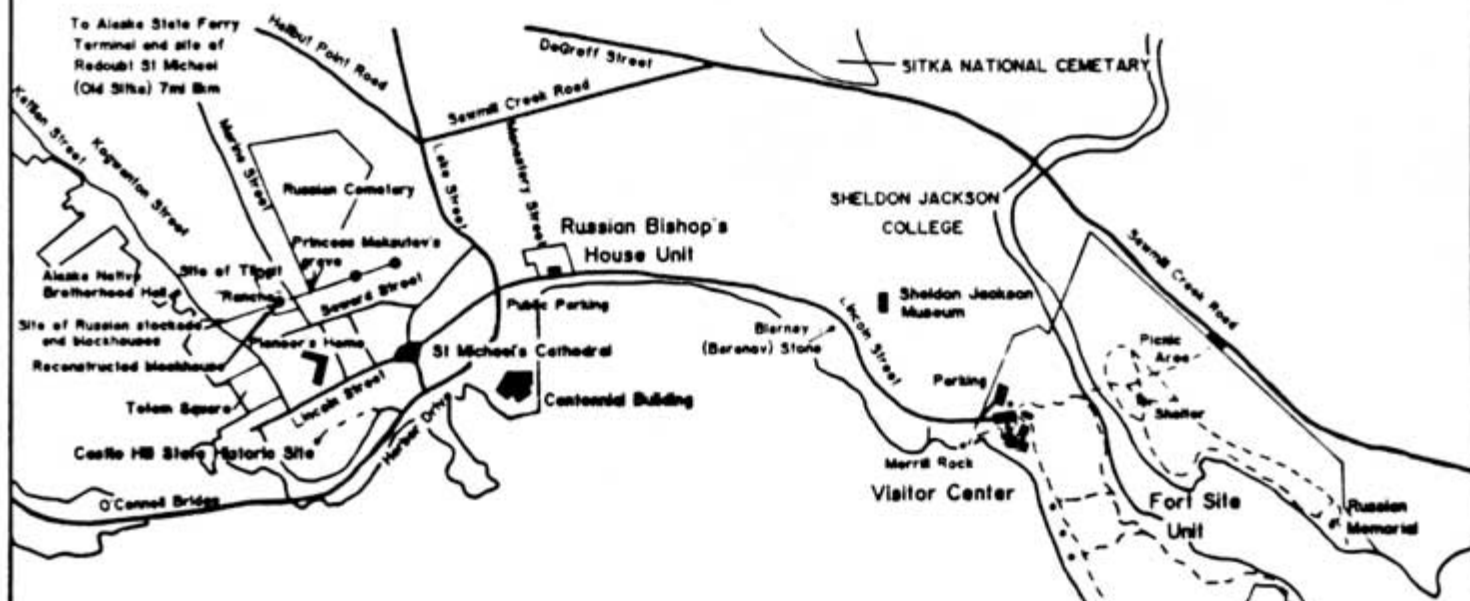








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Chapter 1: DESCRIPTION OF THE RESOURCE (continued)

COMPONENT RESOURCES

Early component resources

President Benjamin A. Harrison set aside much of the area now known as Sitka National Historical Park by proclamation in 1890. The area, of approximately 50 acres, was described as:

The tract of land bounded on the west by the line established by the survey made for the Presbyterian Mission, and along the shore line of the bay at low tide to the mouth of Indian River, and across the mouth of said river and along its right bank for an average width of 500 feet, along said bank to the point known as Indian River falls, and also on the left bank of said river from said fall an average of two hundred feet, from said falls to the eastern line or boundary as shown on the mission plat, for a public park.

The President designated the area as a public park, but did not further specify the values to be protected. His proclamation also, in its first paragraph, set aside nearby Navy Creek as a water source for naval and mercantile vessels and reserved the whole of Japonski Island for naval and military purposes. [3]

District of Alaska Governor Lyman E. Knapp initiated the chain of events that led to the proclamation. In November of 1889, Knapp advised Secretary of the Interior John W. Noble that it was time to reserve lands that might be needed for coaling stations, government wharves, public buildings, parade grounds, and bar racks at Douglas Island, Juneau, Kodiak, Sitka, Unalaska, and Wrangell. He cited the possibility that Congress would extend the land laws of the United States to Alaska during its next session. Knapp reported that some individuals in Alaska had begun to stake pre-emptive claims in anticipation of Congressional action. [4]

Early in the 1880s, three of the naval officers stationed at Sitka had claimed homesteads extending from what later became the location of Sheldon Jackson College to Jamestown Bay. In 1882, the officers refused to relinquish their claims in favor of the school but they never perfected them. Also in 1882, American Civil War veteran Nicholas Haley filed a homestead claim "on Indian River N. bank, all above high tide. It shall be known as the Sitka Park and Haley's Homestead." Haley, too, never perfected his title, but the claims clearly indicated that the traditional park on Indian River was in danger of going into private ownership. [5]

The secretary responded to Knapp with the suggestion that he empanel commissioners who would make recommendations regarding lands in Alaska that should be set aside for public

purposes. Knapp then appointed commissioners in several communities. For Sitka, he selected John G. Brady, missionary and merchant; Lt. Cmdr. O.W. Farenholt, commanding officer of USS Pinta, the navy vessel stationed at Sitka from 1884 to 1897; and Henry H. Haydon, Surveyor General and ex-officio Secretary of Alaska. Knapp asked the three to

serve jointly as commissioners to examine and report as to what lands in and about Sitka should be permanently reserved by the Government for its uses for public buildings, barracks, parade grounds, parks, wharves, coaling stations, or other purposes. [6]

The commissioners made their recommendations in a March 31, 1890, report to Governor Knapp. Without explanation, they stated:

We would also recommend for reservation as a public park all that plat of ground, bounded on the West by the line as established by the survey made for the Presbyterian Mission, as above referred to, and along the shors [sic] line of the Bay at low tide to the mouth of the Indian River, and across the mouth of said River, along its right bank for an average width of 500 feet along said bank, to the point known as Indian River Falls: and also on the left bank of said river from said falls, an average width of 200 feet from said falls to the Eastern line or boundry [sic] as shown on the Mission plat. [7]

The commissioners' recommendations were summarized for Secretary Noble in an April 2, 1890, letter from the governor. The secretary, in turn, forwarded the recommendations to the President on June 9, 1890. The President responded with his proclamation, quoted in part above, and an endorsement appended to the secretary's letter.

June 21st, 1890

In accordance with the recommendation of the Secretary of the Interior, the above-described tracts of land in the Territory of Alaska are hereby reserved for the uses and purposes described by the Secretary, until otherwise directed by Congress.

(signed)
Benj Harrison [8]

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Chapter 1: DESCRIPTION OF THE RESOURCE (continued)

SUMMARY

In summary, the component resources of Sitka National Historical Park include cultural, natural, and recreational resources.

The recreational resources were identified through customary usage by the mid-nineteenth century. They included such usages as walking for pleasure, picnicking and game-playing on the banks of Indian River, observation of the river, fishing in the river, enjoyment of the plants and animals that inhabit the area adjacent to the river, and appreciation of vistas to the seaward from vantage points along the walk to the river. These usages were formalized in the 1880s by civic action to enhance the park's recreational facilities through such activities as publicly-supported trail construction and in 1890 by the earliest reservation of the area as a public park. Recognition of the park's recreational values has since been continuous.

The cultural resources were first recognized in the early 1800s when Alexander Baranov had a monument erected to the sailors who were killed in the 1804 Battle of Sitka. Although recreational values predominated for many years, cultural resources began to become more important in 1901 when the first totem poles were placed in the park. The inventory of cultural resources was expanded and their recognition formalized in 1908 when the area was proposed as a national monument. At that time, cultural resources recognized included the 1804 battleground, the site of the former village of the Kiksadi Tlingits, the memorial to Russians killed in the 1804 battle, and totem poles and house posts relocated to the Sitka park. References to a "witch tree" are found in documents leading up to the designation, but not in the 1910 proclamation actually making the designation.

Visual aesthetics, including the beauty of the river, the environment inside the park, and vistas from the park, were recognized as park resources at Sitka at least by the early 1880s. Various species of wildlife were also recognized as park resources about this same time.

In 1926, a replica blockhouse within the park boundaries was added as a park resource. It remained one until 1959 when it was demolished. Its role was subsequently filled by a replica block house erected in downtown Sitka. Although the National Park Service maintains the replica, it does not own the property on which it sits.

In the mid-1960s, the visitor center and the cultural center it houses became park resources. In 1972, the last major resource to be added to date, the Russian Bishop's House and its satellite structures, became a part of the park. A decade later, the park's recreational resources were supplemented by construction of a fitness trail.

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Chapter 2: SITKA -- HISTORICAL OVERVIEW (continued)

TLINGITS

The Tlingits, the most northerly of the Northwest Coast Indians, occupied southeast Alaska possibly 10,000 years ago. Most archeologists believe that the Tlingits moved from the interior of today's Alaska and British Columbia to southeast Alaska. They followed the Nass, Stikine, and Taku rivers to their mouths, then fanned out to occupy the many islands. Although archeologists do not know for certain that Tlingits occupied it, a site on Baranof Island named Hidden Falls has been found. People lived there 8,000 years ago. When Tlingits first came to Sitka Sound is not known, but the Kiksadi Tlingits oral history indicates that they had a permanent village there for a number of years before Euro- Americans arrived. [58]

Because the Coast Mountains come right to the water's edge on Baranof Island, the large Tlingit winter village at Sitka stood on the beach. Fish, shellfish, and land animals were abundant in the area. This largess, combined with the moderate maritime climate, allowed the people to hunt and gather food relatively easily year-round. In late March the people began sea fishing for halibut and cod, and freshwater fishing for Dolly Varden. In early April, they gathered herring. Later that month, sea mammals migrating north passed through southeast Alaska waters. The Sitka Tlingits hunted sea otters, hair seal, fur seal, sea lion, and porpoise. Although whales passed en route north, the Sitka people did not hunt them.

Early in summer, most of the Sitka Tlingits moved to camps near the mouths of freshwater streams to fish for salmon. Kiksadi Tlingit families from the permanent village, Shee-Atika or "by the sea," at Nu-Tlan or Castle Hill, used a summer fishing camp, Gaja-Heen or "water coming from way up" at the mouth of Starrigavan Creek and another at the mouth of Indian River. The people most commonly trapped salmon in rock weirs or hooked them. Other Sitka Tlingits embarked on trading and war voyages early in summer. They might travel as far south as Prince of Wales and the Queen Charlotte islands. The Tlingits were frequently at war among themselves and with the Haida people to the south. They fought to obtain slaves, new hunting and fishing territories, and to increase their material possessions.

In late summer, families moved to hunting camps. There the women and children gathered berries, roots, and grasses. The men hunted deer, black bears, brown bears, mountain goats, and sheep. With the approach of winter, the Sitka people returned to the large village at Castle Hill. Year-round they could dig clams and gather crabs from the nearby tidal flats. [59]

The Sitka spruce forests that covered the lower elevations of Baranof Island provided wood that was used to build houses and provide heat. At their permanent village the Sitka people lived in large, rectangular, gable-roofed plank houses. The houses measured up to 30 by 40 feet. As many as 12 families and their slaves lived in a house. The Sitka village had a number

of these houses. At their seasonal camps, the people had smaller wood structures. [[60](#)]

The people also used wood to make canoes. Although the coastal waterways through southeast Alaska were dangerous, they provided the best transportation routes through the region. The Tlingits had travel, war, work, and hunting canoes. A canoe was made from a single tree. Typically, the canoes were long, narrow, and high-pointed at the bow and stern. For their larger war canoes the Sitka Tlingits traded with the Haida people to the south who lived on Prince of Wales and the Queen Charlotte islands where western red cedar was available. [[61](#)]

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Chapter 2: SITKA -- HISTORICAL OVERVIEW (continued)

SITKA SETTLES DOWN

For a few years after the purchase of Alaska, Sitka continued to be the center for the collection of furs in Alaska. In contrast to the Russian system, more than one fur trading company operated in Alaska under the Americans. Sitka was not close to the richest fur trading areas and increasingly was bypassed by the fur traders and trading companies. Trade in furs, however, continued to be a major local economic activity at Sitka. During their heyday in the 1910s and 1920s, a few fur farms operated in Sitka and on several of the islands nearby. [90]

Among those who came to Sitka following the purchase were a number of prospectors. In 1870 gold was found at nearby Silver Bay near the town. For many years miners worked a mine in the upper Indian River valley. Ten years after the first discovery, Joe Juneau and Richard Harris were grubstaked by Sitka resident and miner George Pilz. They discovered placer gold in creeks near today's Juneau. Following that discovery, many residents of Sitka left for the booming mining towns of Juneau and Douglas. Gold mining continued in the Sitka area, however, until World War II. More than three-quarters of a million ounces of gold was recovered from Sitka area mines. Gypsum, discovered in 1902, was commercially mined in the Sitka mining district until 1923. [91]

To reach some of the mining sites, a bridge was built over the lower portion of Indian River in 1888. Funds to build the bridge were raised by subscription. I.B. Hammond built the bridge at a cost of \$142.50. The last mention of the structure was a call for additional funds so that the structure could be painted. [92]

American missionaries also headed for Sitka during the 1870s. The Reverend John G. Brady and Fannie E. Kellogg, of the Board of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church, opened a school for Native children in 1878. Later, the school became Sitka Industrial Training School, and subsequently it was named to honor the long-time Presbyterian missionary Sheldon Jackson. [93] The Russian Orthodox Church continued its mission at Sitka after the 1867 transfer. In 1897 Monk Anatolii Kamenskii, working at Sitka, requested funding from the church for a school building. The Russian Bishop's House, then used as an orphanage, was too crowded and in need of repair. [94]

In a few short years, Juneau surpassed Sitka in population and economic activity. When larger mining operations started at Juneau and nearby Douglas and those boom towns became more stable communities, people began to clamor to have the capital of the district moved from Sitka to Juneau. In 1901 the decision was made to move the capital. The actual move, however, was not completed until 1906.

The loss of the government payroll impacted Sitka and between 1900 and 1910 Sitka's

population declined 25 percent. As the fishing and fish processing industries grew between 1910 and 1920, the population grew by 13 percent. In 1878 the Cutter Packing Company opened one of the first two salmon canneries in Alaska at Starrigavan Bay near Sitka. Although it closed shortly after the 1879 season, several other canneries opened in the vicinity during the 1880s. A few salteries operated for several years as well. A market developed for halibut, and a cold storage plant opened at Sitka in the early 1900s. For a brief time during the 1910s a shore-based whaling station operated at nearby Sitkalidak Island. A herring fishery flourished during the 1920s and 1930s. Over the years a number of fishermen and cannery workers made Sitka their home. [95]

Sitka's other major economic activity was tourism. In 1879, John Muir made the first of five trips to Alaska. Upon his return to California, he wrote several articles about southeast Alaska. Others ventured north. Some, such as Eliza Ruhamah Scidmore, wrote accounts of their trips that were subsequently published. Beginning in the 1880s, increasing numbers of people began to visit Alaska to see its scenic wonders, Native people, and evidences of its Russian heritage. All of the steamships stopped at Sitka. [96] Many Russian buildings still stood in the town. The Russian Orthodox Cathedral with its beautiful icons was a major attraction. In the 1890s the town residents restored Baranov's Castle, but the wooden structure burned in 1894. In addition to viewing the buildings, visitors could purchase Native artifacts such as baskets and wood carvings, and follow the boardwalk from the wharf through town to the 1804 battle site and Indian River. [97]

The thousands of people who headed to the Klondike gold fields in 1897 and 1898 bypassed Sitka. The community was not along the Inside Passage route that took stampedeers from San Francisco, Portland, and Seattle to Dyea and Skagway. The increased attention paid to Alaska as a result of the gold discoveries in the north impacted Sitka in other ways. An agricultural station opened in 1898, and the station's chief made Sitka his head quarters. A magnetic observatory opened the same year. After Tongass National Forest was created in 1902, the U.S. Forest Service had a ranger at Sitka. When the submarine cable was completed in 1906, Sitka was connected to the rest of the world by telegraph. [98] But for the most part, after the capital moved, Sitka was a small, relatively isolated community during the early 1900s. Fishing, fish processing, and tourism were the mainstays of the local economy. Several residents wrote that the major event in town was the weekly arrival of the mail boat. Beginning in the 1920s, a few float planes brought visitors and a little freight to town. The population was around 1,200 people.

In 1913 Sitka was selected by the first Territorial Legislature as the location for the first Pioneers' Home for indigent prospectors who had spent many years in Alaska. In 1934 a large, second building was added. Southeast Alaska Natives organized the Alaska Native Brotherhood at Sitka in 1912. The group formed to fight for citizenship rights and equal treatment. Camps soon organized in other Southeast Alaskan communities, and a companion group, the Alaska Native Sisterhood, also formed. By 1920 Sitka had become a small, stable community that changed little until World War II. About 1904 the Sitka Wharf and Power Company tapped Indian River for a water-distribution system that served the center of town. A water-wagon, filled at Indian River, served outlying areas. As late as 1940 the U.S. Marshal had the people in jail run the water wagon to Indian River. After the five- gallon cans were filled they were delivered to residents for \$5.00 a week. Around 1942 and 1943 additional water lines were constructed to serve more parts of the town. [99]

Just before World War II started, the U.S. Government began a military build-up that included establishing bases in Alaska. The old naval reservation on Japonski Island was selected for a U.S. Navy seaplane base. From there, PBY airplanes could patrol the North Pacific. An army base opened at Sitka to guard the naval station. In addition, a radio "beam" station was constructed on Biorka Island, and gun emplacements were installed on Harbor

Peak and on several islands in Sitka Sound. The military personnel and construction crews brought new life to Sitka.



Naval Air Station, Sitka on Japonski Island, 1944.
(Photo courtesy of Alaska Historical Library)

After the war ended, the bases closed. The government transferred their buildings to the U.S. Department of the Interior's Alaska Native Service for use as a medical and education facility. The hospital was one of the main centers for treatment of tuberculosis during the late 1940s and early 1950s. It was transferred to the U.S. Public Health Service in 1955. In 1948, the Bureau of Indian Affairs opened a secondary-level boarding school, Mt. Edgecumbe High School, at the site. It served Native children from throughout Alaska. In 1985 the State of Alaska took over operation of the school. Sheldon Jackson Industrial Training School evolved into a college offering two and four year programs. After statehood in 1959, the State of Alaska opened a Public Safety Academy at Sitka, and a few years later the University of Alaska started a community college there. Sitka became a regional education center.

Several sawmills operated at Sitka throughout the 1900s. Lumber from Sitka had been important in building the gold rush boom towns of Dyea and Skagway. Some lumbering occurred over the years. After World War II, there was increased interest in leasing areas on Baranof Island for logging. A Japanese-owned pulp mill at the mouth of Silver Bay began operating in 1959. Sitka's population increased by 63 percent as approximately 500 people found work at the mill. In 1977, the Coast Guard established an air station on Japonski Island, in part to enforce the new 200-mile offshore fishing limit. [100]

The tourism industry flourished in the post-World War II era as more people learned about Alaska. Until the mid-1950s steamship companies offered passenger service and organized tours, particularly through southeast Alaska. As it had been before the war, Sitka was a favorite tourist stop. The national monument, availability of Native arts and crafts, and remaining structures from the Russian period, most particularly St. Michael's Cathedral, attracted people. In January 1966, the wooden cathedral burned. Fortunately, measured drawings of the structure had been prepared by the U.S. Forest Service and completed by the National Park Service in 1962. Sitka residents spearheaded an effort to reconstruct the cathedral on its original site, which by the 1960s was in the center of downtown Sitka. For the Alaska Purchase Centennial in 1967, the State of Alaska improved a commemorative park atop Castle Hill with can non, interpretive markers, and flagstaffs. That same year, the city opened its community Centennial Building and the Sitka Historical Society started a museum

there. The Visitor Center at Sitka National Monument, built in 1965, further enhanced tourism. The federal Board of Indian Arts and Crafts had started a program at Sitka in 1962 and its Native artists moved to the new center. About the same time the Sitka Summer Music Festival began. During the 1960s transportation improvements brought more visitors to Sitka. The State of Alaska began its Marine Highway system in 1963. In 1967, jet air service to Sitka from Anchorage and Seattle started. In 1972 the national monument was redesignated a national historical park and its mission expanded to interpret the Russian experience in Alaska. The Russian Bishop's House was added to the park. There had been 150 buildings in Sitka in 1867. When the house was added to the park, it was one of only four buildings surviving from 1867.

The 1980 census gave the population of Sitka as 7,803. Ten percent of the people are Alaska Natives. [[101](#)]

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Chapter 3: SITKA NATIONAL MONUMENT, EARLY YEARS

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MONUMENT ADMINISTRATION

Agencies vie for monument control

When Sitka National Monument was created in 1910, the National Park Service had not yet come into being. It took some time to determine which agency would take responsibility for national monuments.

Local interest in the park remained after the Sitka property was assigned monument status. The District of Alaska government also continued its concern for the park, begun when the seat of government was at Sitka between 1884 and 1906. The Alaska Road Commission, originally known as the Board of Road Commissioners for Alaska, also tended to matters in the park. Congress had created the commission within the War Department in 1905 to build and maintain roads in Alaska. An army engineer officer appointed by the Secretary of War and two other army officers drawn from troops stationed in Alaska oversaw the commission's work. [102]

Given Tongass National Forest Supervisor William A. Langille's role in creating the monument, the Department of the Interior might have asked the Forest Service for help in managing the new monument at Sitka. But national-level rivalries between the Departments of Agriculture and Interior were reflected in antagonistic relations between field divisions. [103]

On September 16, 1912, the Secretary of the Interior decreed that A. Christensen, chief of the General Land Office Field Division at Seattle, would superintend all national monuments in Alaska. Christensen, in turn, directed that employees of his office -- located in Seattle -- whenever in the Sitka area, should exercise such supervision as they could over the monument without incurring additional expense. In particular, they were to act "with the object of preventing unauthorized exploration or vandalism, or the removal of relics, and . . . be prepared to report on . . . action in the matter." [104]

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Chapter 3: SITKA NATIONAL MONUMENT, EARLY YEARS

(continued)

RESOURCE ISSUES

Territorial governor initiates totem pole project

Alaska's governor John W. Troy submitted the final proposal of the late 1930s that affected the resources of Sitka National Monument. He wrote to A.E. Demaray, a senior park service official, to suggest that it would be possible to get Civilian Conservation Corps help not only for landscaping at Sitka, but also to rehabilitate the totem poles there. Such work would need a National Park Service technical advisor. It could begin as early as October 1938. [184]

Demaray responded that the park service was interested. It had "no general plan of development for Sitka National Monument," and would be glad to participate in the program. He regarded it as essential that a technician be employed to see that the work was properly planned and executed. Would the Alaska Civilian Conservation Corps (administered by the U.S. Forest Service) be able to employ the technician? If arrangements could be made, Demaray said, details would be worked out by the park service regional office at San Francisco. [185]

Alaska Regional Forester B. Frank Heintzleman, who may have been behind Troy's original suggestion, followed it up in January of 1939. The Forest Service had obtained Works Progress Administration funding for totem pole restoration. He telegraphed Demaray with the news that funds were available. If the park service could provide a qualified foreman, the project would begin. [186] Cammerer, now Director of the National Park Service, replied that no park service specialists were available to supervise the work. The service could pay for the services of an ethnologist or qualified graduate student in anthropology to give initial supervision. He suggested looking for such an expert at the University of Washington or the University of Alaska. If such scientific assistance were not available, the project could go ahead so long as before and after photographs were made and "record card file" documentation of work was created. [187]

By April of 1939 Heintzleman was able to write to Cammerer that the totem pole work at Sitka was underway with WPA funds. He enclosed a photographic record of the poles in place on February 18. The Forest Service would submit a final report when the work was finished. [188]

The Alaska Road Commission provided a dump truck for the project. The Forest Service Wood Products Laboratory sent advice on preservation treatment for the poles. John Maurstand served as foreman for the project, with George Benson as chief carver and nine Indian workers. The WPA funds were used up by March and the Forest Service continued

work with Civilian Conservation Corps money. About half of the old poles, many of which were badly deteriorated, were duplicated. Duplicates and repaired poles were treated with Permatox B, painted with compounds care fully constructed to match original Native colors, and then treated again with Pentra-Seal. [189]

Most of the work at Sitka was completed by March of 1940. Although plans were discussed to build an open air shed in which to store originals of the duplicated poles, they were eventually shunted aside to uncovered storage on skids. [190]

While the totem pole work was beginning, the park service began to reassess its treatment of Sitka National Monument's resources. Mount McKinley National Park Superintendent Frank T. Been and Earl A. Trager of the service's research and information bureau visited Sitka to look things over. [191] Carl P. Russell, Supervisor of Research and Information for the service, suggested a special study of the area from "anthropological, historical and museum standpoints." [192]

The totem pole rehabilitation and duplication project marked a significant resource policy decision for Sitka National Monument. When the park service agreed to plans to duplicate entire poles and then concluded that some of the originals were beyond preservation, it established a lasting ethic of resource management that extended through the next 30 years of Sitka National Monument administration.

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Chapter 4: SITKA NATIONAL MONUMENT, MIDDLE YEARS

(continued)

INTRODUCTION

The Context Changes

The Sitka that the National Park Service's first full-time custodian for Sitka National Monument came to in 1940 was changing rapidly. Army and navy personnel were returning to Sitka in numbers after an absence of decades. Their presence and purpose affected Sitka, the custodian's role in the town, and operations of Sitka National Monument.

Sitka had been the scene of an army garrison from 1867 to 1877. After the army pulled out, a series of naval installations were located in Sitka. Most of them were located on nearby Japonski Island, which had been established as a naval reservation by the 1890 presidential proclamation that had also reserved the public park on Indian River.

Sitka was an anchorage for a navy ship from 1879 to 1897, host to a Marine Barracks from 1884 to 1912, locus for a naval hospital from 1904 to 1912, and home community to a naval radio station from 1907 to the early 1930s. For most of these years there was a navy coal pile located on Japonski Island. In 1931, the radio station was decommissioned and its buildings and those of the coal pile were put in the custody of the commandant of the Puget Sound Navy Yard.

Eiler Hansen, who had earlier corresponded with the National Park Service about erecting the Merrill plaque, wrote a 1940 article in which he observed that "...the navy finally discovered that it had a coal shed which had never housed any coal, a wharf at which no ships ever docked, a radio station where no messages were sent or received and a complement of men who were being paid for raising gold fish and coots." Sitkans' efforts to re establish the navy at Sitka were, according to Hansen, to no avail. But in 1935, in his words, "the Navy Board of Strategy . . . turned its myopic eye on Alaska." Adm. Ernest J. King came to investigate and visited Sitka. The result of the visit was, again according to Hansen, that the navy gouged out a hole for an airplane ramp on Japonski Island, converted the old coal shed there to a barracks, tied up converted destroyers at the dock on the island, and transformed a house into a bachelor officers' quarters. Although Hansen attributed the navy's renewed attention to "some dark and devious process unknown to the mind of ordinary man," the decision to build at Sitka evolved from a rational process. [193]

The Washington Naval Treaty of 1922 had prohibited the navy from building bases in Alaskan waters, but the navy conducted many aerial and ship surveys in those waters during the 1920s and 1930s. When Japan allowed the treaty to expire without renewal in 1936, the navy commissioned Rear Adm. Arthur J. Hepburn, a former Director of Naval Intelligence,

to head a board which would study and report on its strategic needs. While the matter was under study, the navy designated its old reservation on Japonski Island as the Naval Seaplane Base, Sitka, in 1937, and the Fleet Air Base, Sitka, in February 1938. These early activities resulted in only a few navy personnel being relocated to Sitka, while half squadrons (six plane detachments) of patrol seaplanes rotated through Sitka every six months.

The Hepburn Board submitted its report in December 1938. Naval air, destroyer, and submarine bases were recommended for Sitka and also for Kodiak and Dutch Harbor. Congress appropriated some of the necessary money, contracts were let to Siems Drake Puget Sound, a joint venture construction company, and the first workers arrived in the fall of 1939 to begin building the new naval facilities.

In September of 1939, although only a few contractors' buildings were in place on Japonski Island, the navy designated its Sitka facility as a Naval Air Station. Ultimately 65 percent of 155 separate projects at a total cost of 25 million dollars would be completed in and around Sitka. The contractors brought in nearly 1,700 workers (more than the total of Sitka's estimated 1939 population), navy personnel arrived to staff the facility, and army troops assembled to guard the navy facilities. Scores of buildings were erected and more than 13 miles of road were laid out on Japonski Island and the smaller islets in Sitka Bay that the contractors connected by causeways.

Sitka's population exploded, its resources such as Indian River were tapped to provide fresh water for the new residents of Japonski Island, prices for food and housing rose, and construction needs triggered a search for gravel sources. [[194](#)]

SITKA

Administrative History



Chapter 4: SITKA NATIONAL MONUMENT, MIDDLE YEARS

(continued)

RESOURCE ISSUES, 1940--1965

Preservation Professionalism and Sitka

National Park Service efforts to deal with the blockhouse issues at Sitka, and indeed with other archeological and historical issues at Sitka reflected the growth of preservation expertise in the service as a whole.

It was only in 1931 that the service was able to add its first professional historian to the staff despite the personal interest of leaders such as Albright and Mather in history and historic sites. This came in the midst of efforts to transfer cultural parks managed by other federal agencies to the National Park Service and only four years after restoration efforts began at what was to become Colonial Williamsburg. [286] On the heels of these essentially internal developments came the infusion of expertise provided by park service administration Civilian Conservation Corps work forces that preserved and developed historic sites and of the Historic American Buildings Survey.i [287]

This increasing staff expertise about historic sites probably influenced Frank T. Been's 1939 comments on Sitka's "antithetical" relationship to National Park Service purposes. It certainly made it possible for Ben C. Miller to seek advice from regional historians about the historical studies he was encouraged to undertake and resulted in recognition by senior service officials such as Ronald F. Lee and O.A. Tomlinson of the historical values in Sitka that lay outside monument boundaries.

The results of this evolution of events at Sitka National Monument were reflected in efforts to systematically define Sitka's interpretive focus, the injunction from Washington to preserve the original totem poles for which replicas were being created, the appointment of historians to the staff at Sitka, and in creased use of contractors and regional office professionals in solving monument problems The blockhouse reconstruction and later events demonstrated the difficulty, however, of adequately controlling such projects from afar.

End of Chapter 4

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Last Updated: 04-Nov-2000

SITKA

Administrative History



Chapter 5: SITKA NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK, 1966-1986

(continued)

MONUMENT/PARK ADMINISTRATION

Expansion of the monument

Sitka residents became interested in preserving its historic buildings and interpreting the community's history early in the 1960s. They hoped to increase tourism to their town, and began elaborate preparations to celebrate the Alaska purchase centennial in 1967. A major waterfront redevelopment program was carried out in 1964. After the January 2, 1966, fire that destroyed the Russian Orthodox cathedral and three other historic structures in downtown Sitka, community members and city officials began to work with the National Park Service to plan for preservation and perhaps, reconstruction, of buildings to commemorate Sitka's long, rich history. The San Francisco Service Center conducted a field study at Sitka in 1967. In October of that year, George B. Hartzog, Jr., Director of the National Park Service, and the assistant and regional directors met with Alaska's Governor Walter J. Hickel and discussed the service's interests in the state. The possible expansion of Sitka National Monument was one of the topics discussed. [288]

Theodosius, the Russian Orthodox Bishop of Sitka, met with representatives of the National Park Service in San Francisco in February 1968. At that meeting he expressed the need for assistance from the National Park Service to preserve the historic sites and buildings in church ownership at Sitka. That spring, groups such as the Greater Sitka Chamber of Commerce were approached to support the idea.

The same year the National Park Service published Sitka Alter natives Study. The report considered three possible courses of action regarding Sitka National Monument. The first was no new acquisitions; the park service would cooperate with other managers of historic properties at Sitka. The second was to acquire the Russian Mission, as the Russian Bishop's House was then called. The final alternative was to acquire the Russian Mission and the reconstructed blockhouse in downtown Sitka. At the blockhouse site, the plan called for construction of a complex of buildings that recreated a part of Russian Sitka. Proposed structures at the site included a section of the palisade, the blockhouse, the Native Russian Orthodox Chapel, and Native cultural structures including a small log school and community house. The study team recommended the third alternative. It also supported redesignating the monument, which was created by presidential proclamation, a national historical park, a category created by Congress.

The study argued for acquisition of the Russian Bishop's House because it was the most important remaining Russian-built structure at Sitka. The owner, the Russian Orthodox Church, was not financially able to provide the desperately needed stabilization work. The

State of Alaska did not appear to be in a position to preserve the building. If it did not become public property, the authors of the study argued, the building would probably be destroyed.

A city-sponsored plan, Sitka Historical Sites--A Plan for Redevelopment, was adopted in 1969. It endorsed the alternatives study prepared by the National Park Service. The city's plan also recommended that the National Park Service manage Castle Hill and Old Sitka historic sites, properties at that time part of the Alaska State Park system. [289]

These two plans were presented to Alaska's congressional delegation. In 1971, Senator Ted Stevens introduced S1497 concerning additions to Sitka National Monument. Representative Nick Begich introduced a similar bill in the house, HR5803. The bills proposed acquiring the Russian Bishop's House. The block house acquisition was not part of the introduced legislation. The City of Sitka, Sitka Historical Society, and the Alaska Historical Society expressed strong support for the bills. Sitka National Monument Superintendent Daniel R. Kuehn traveled to Washington, D.C. , where he testified at Congressional hearings on the proposed legislation. [290]

Public Law 92-501 was signed by President Richard M. Nixon on Alaska Day, October 18, 1972. Sitka National Monument was redesignated Sitka National Historical Park. The law also enlarged the fort site unit to include the city and state tidelands and a strip of land along Sawmill Creek Road, although the park did not own the lands. Finally, Congress appropriated funds for the National Park Service to purchase the Russian Bishop's House. The act stated that acquisition of the house was for the purpose of "commemorating czarist Russia's exploration and colonization of Alaska. . . ." [291] Transfer of ownership was finalized in 1973 after satisfactory resolution of a civil suit brought against the Orthodox Church in America concerning two feet of land on the west end of the property. [292] The park service paid \$106,000 for the land and buildings at the site.

The National Park Service acquired the lot, the house, and two small structures, a school built in 1897 and a residence built in 1887. Several years later, in 1976, the Diocese of Sitka and Alaska of the Orthodox Church in America signed an agreement providing for donation or permanent loan to the National Park Service of church objects in the buildings. For its part, the National Park Service agreed to care for and store the loaned items and to permit the Church to use the chapel in the Russian Bishop's House on certain liturgical occasions.

The reconstructed blockhouse in downtown Sitka was not mentioned in the law. Efforts to transfer management responsibility to the State of Alaska failed, as did attempts to get ownership of land transferred to the park service from the U.S. Bureau of Land Management. The park service continued to have the responsibility for maintaining the site. Its officials continued to recommend that the site be transferred to state ownership.

The 1972 legislation was important not only for the property and money it added to the Sitka facility, but also because it gave Congressional sanction to a park system unit created by presidential proclamation.

SITKA

Administrative History



Chapter 5: SITKA NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK, 1966-1986

(continued)

CONCLUSION

Sitka National Historical Park changed a great deal in the last twenty years. What is regarded as a definitive solution to the Indian River erosion control problem was completed. More people annually visited the park. The park offered more programs for visitors: interpretive exhibits and slide and film programs in the visitor center that was new at the start of this period, the Southeast Alaska Indian Cultural Center, and improved trails through the park. The park expanded its purpose to interpret the Russian period of Alaska's history, and within the next year it should complete the fifteen-year long Russian Bishop's House restoration project. The park staff increased in numbers during this recent period, although today it is smaller than it was three years ago. A superintendent is permanently stationed at the park. With completion of the Russian Bishop's House restoration, the question "what's next" begs for an answer.

End of Chapter 5

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Dated

Land Planning Division

Drawn by HLG Feb 16 1951 NM 7003

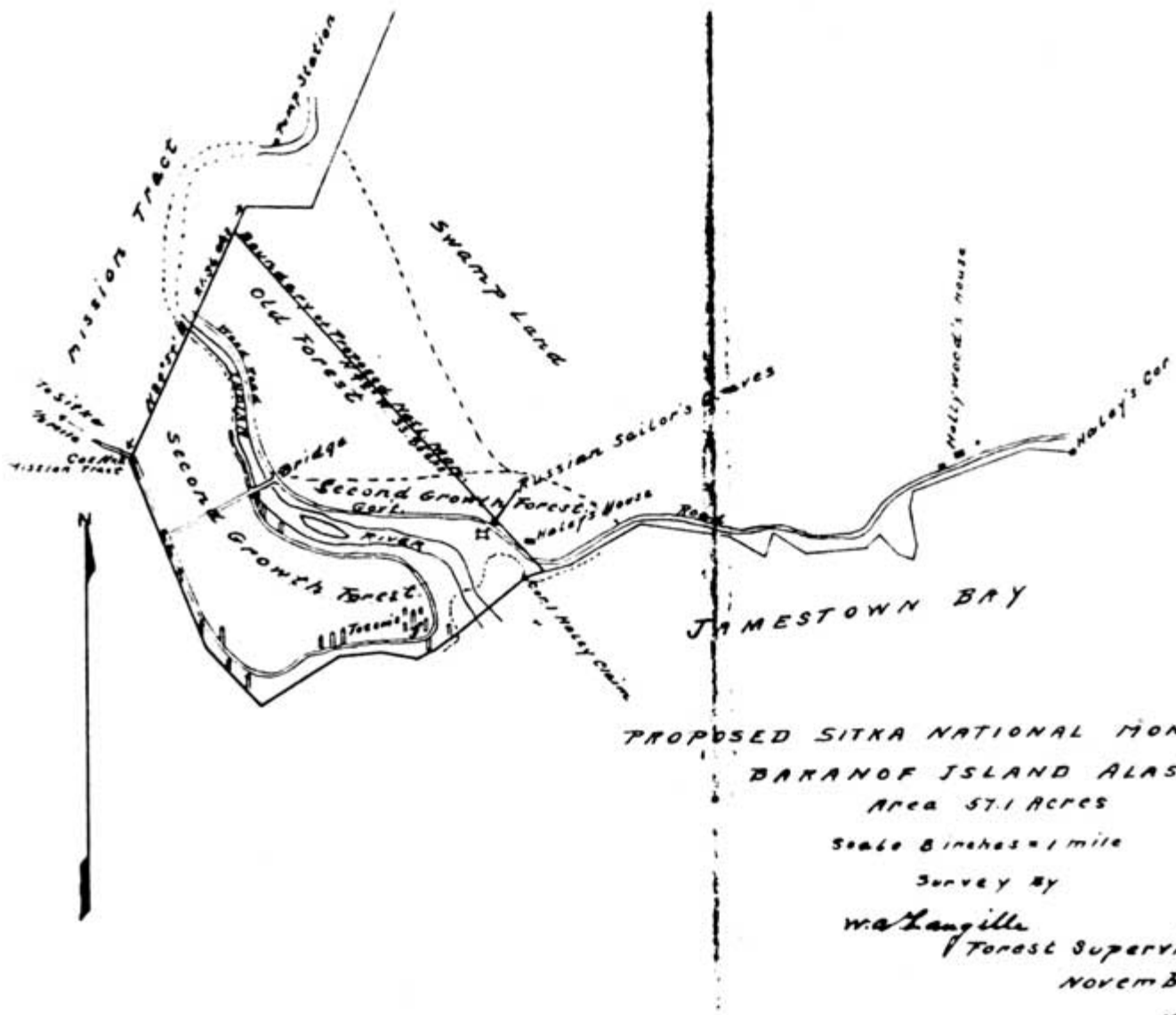
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S. 55°49'W. 364.32

S. 59°31'W. 204.60



PROPOSED SITKA NATIONAL MONUMENT

BARANOF ISLAND ALASKA

Area 57.1 ACRES

Scale 8 inches = 1 mile

Survey by

W. Langille

Forest Supervisor

NOVEMBER 10-12.

1908

SITKA NATIONAL MONUMENT

ALASKA

Embracing a tract of land which includes the mouth of Indian River and adjacent territory near Sitka, containing about fifty seven acres.



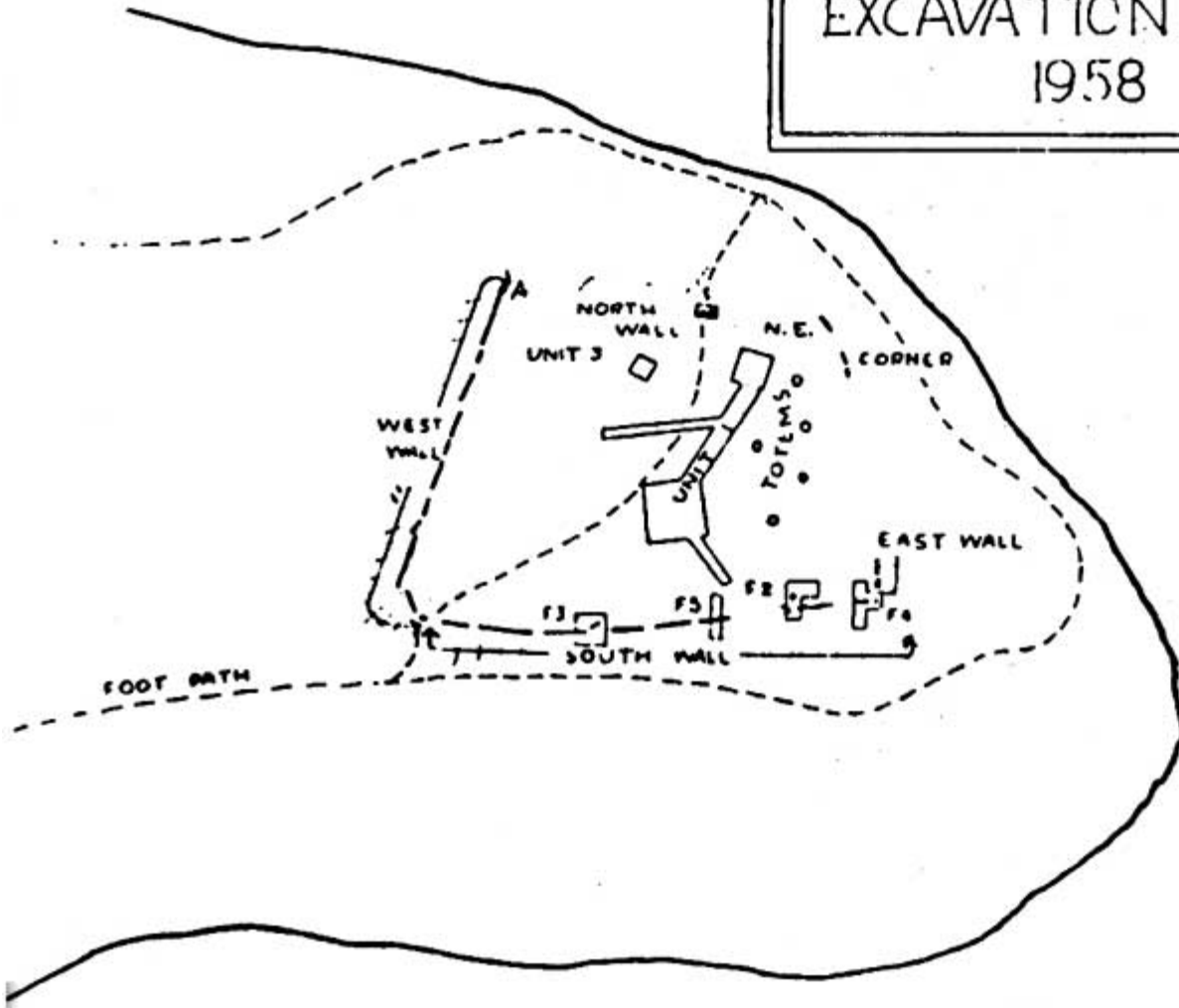
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GENERAL LAND OFFICE
Fred Denrett, Commissioner

INDIAN
RIVER

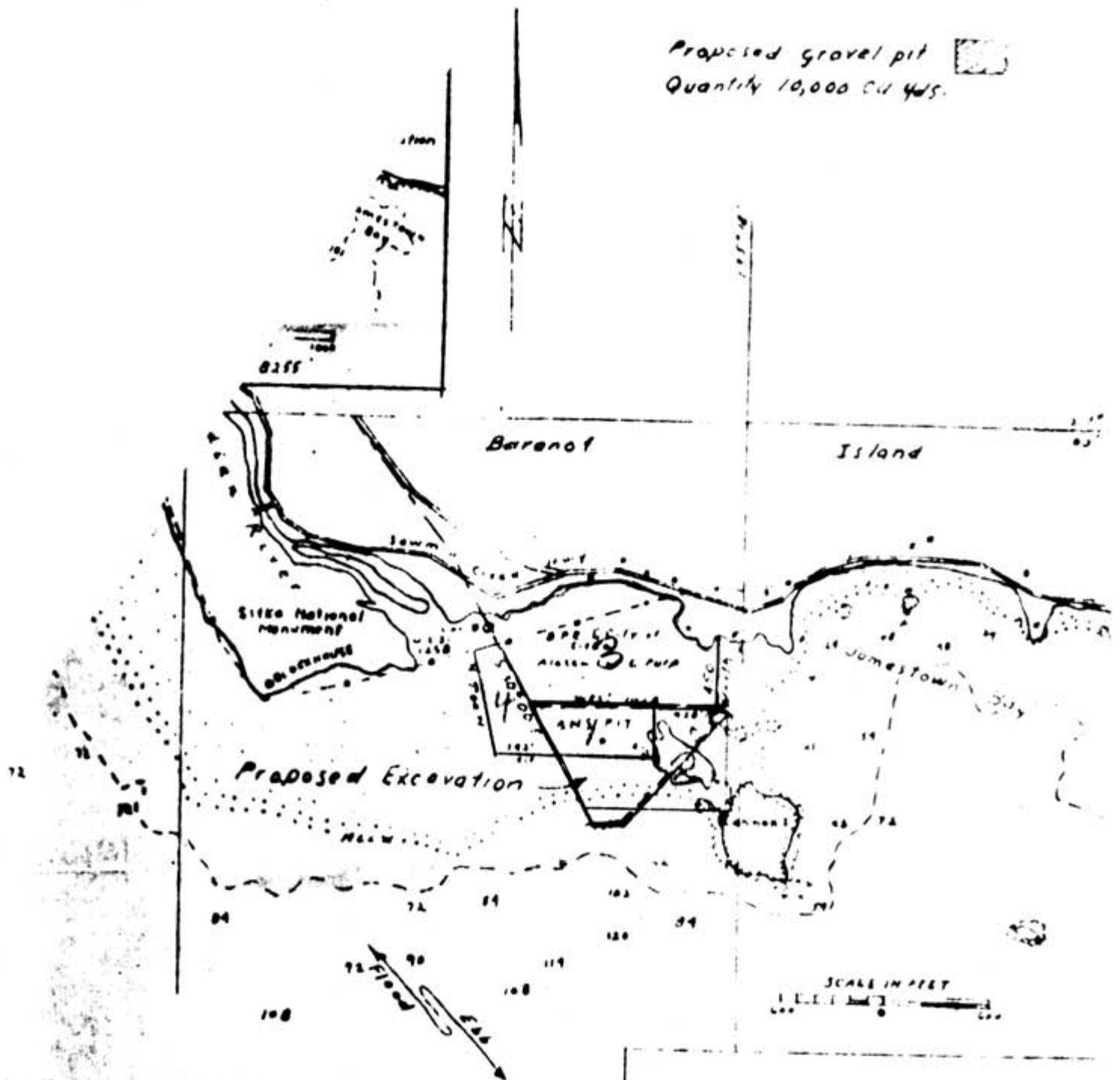
RUSSIAN

GRAVES

Sitka Nat. Mon.
EXCAVATION UNITS
1958



Proposed gravel pit
Quantity 10,000 cu yds.



No Harbor Lines Established

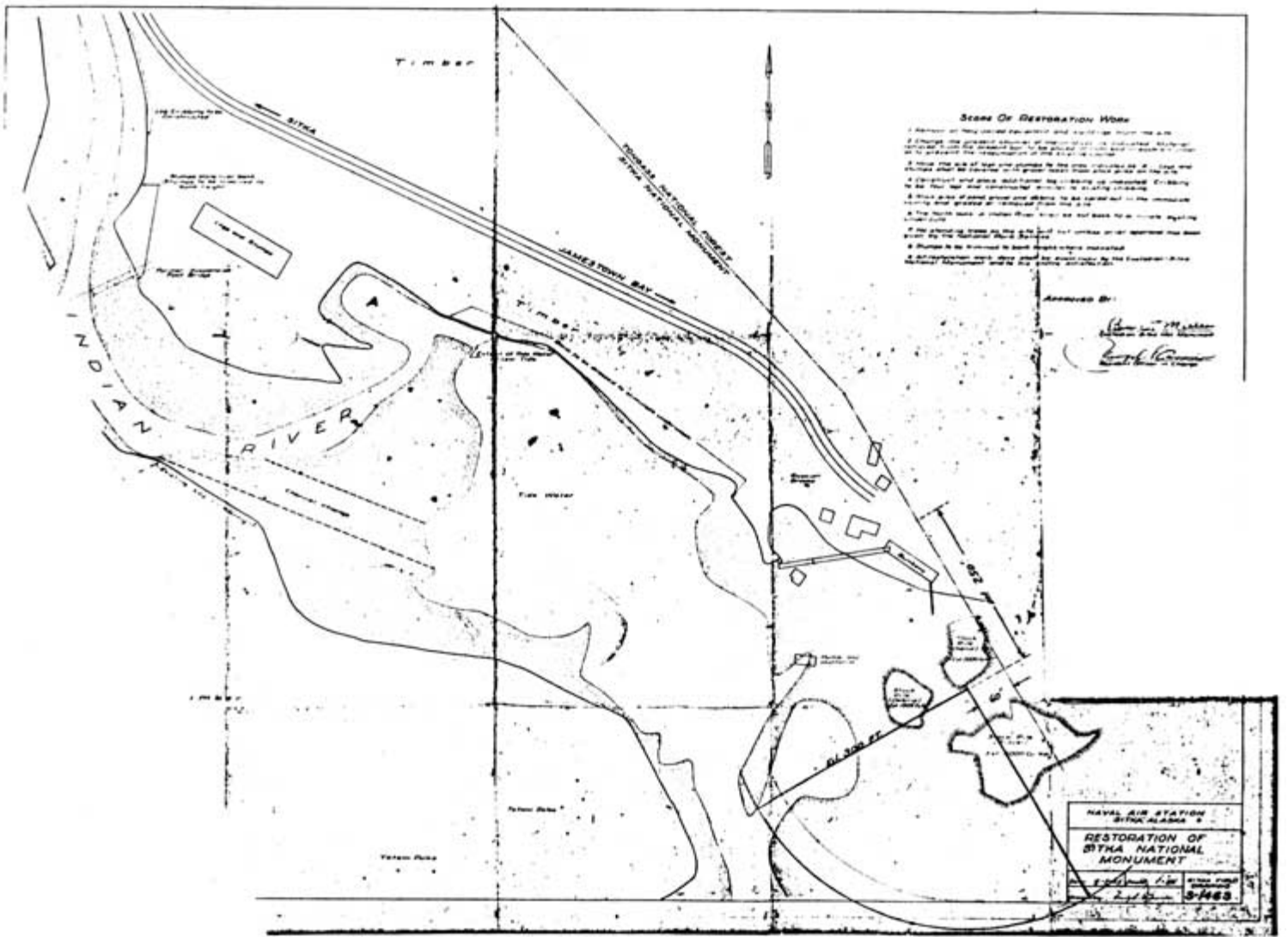
1. - Public Health Service
2. - Fred Pinson Co
3. - Dept of Highways - City
4. - John C Miller

Proposed Gravel Excavation

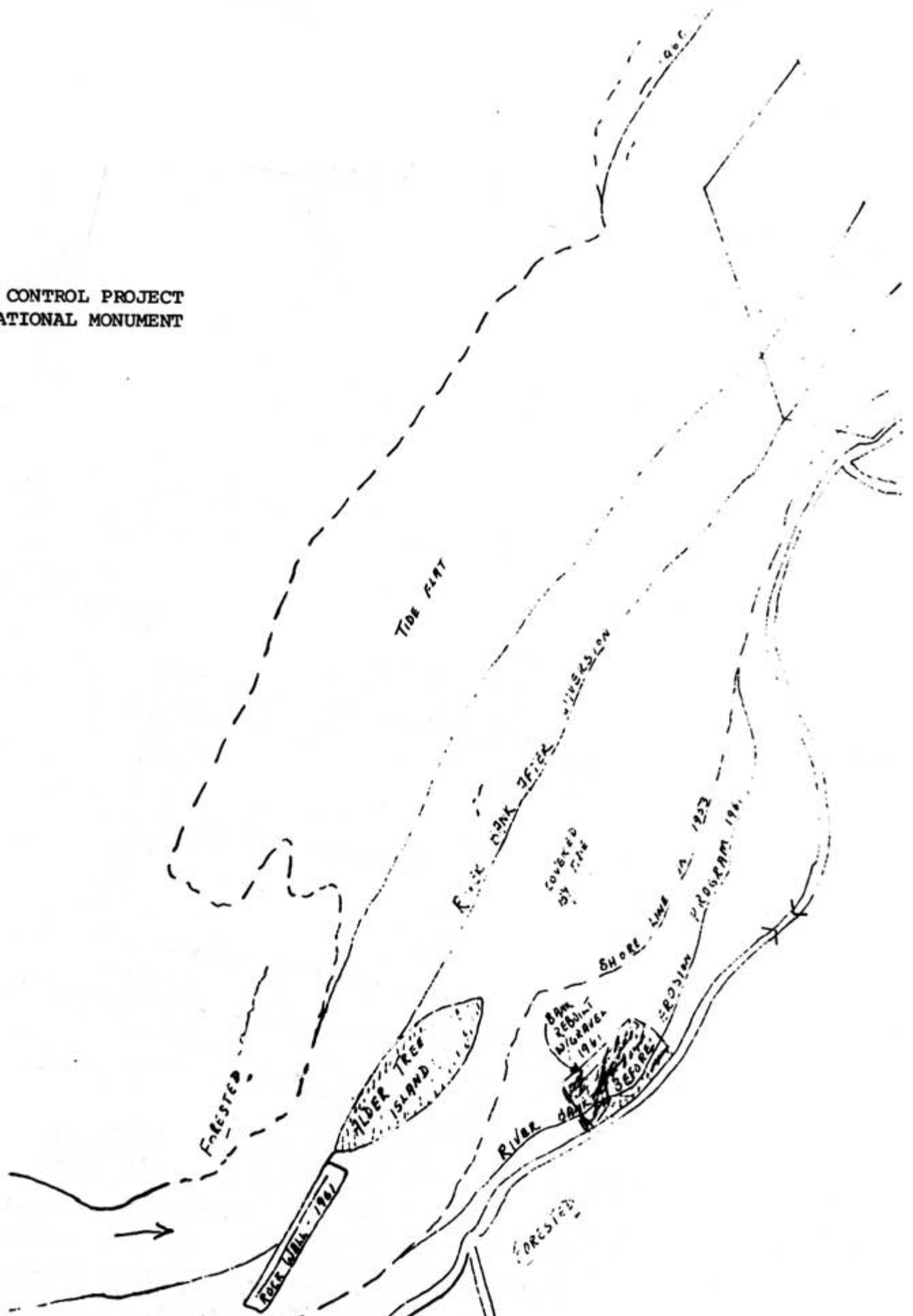
In: Jamestown Bay

Near the Mouth of the Indian R.
SITKA, ALASKA

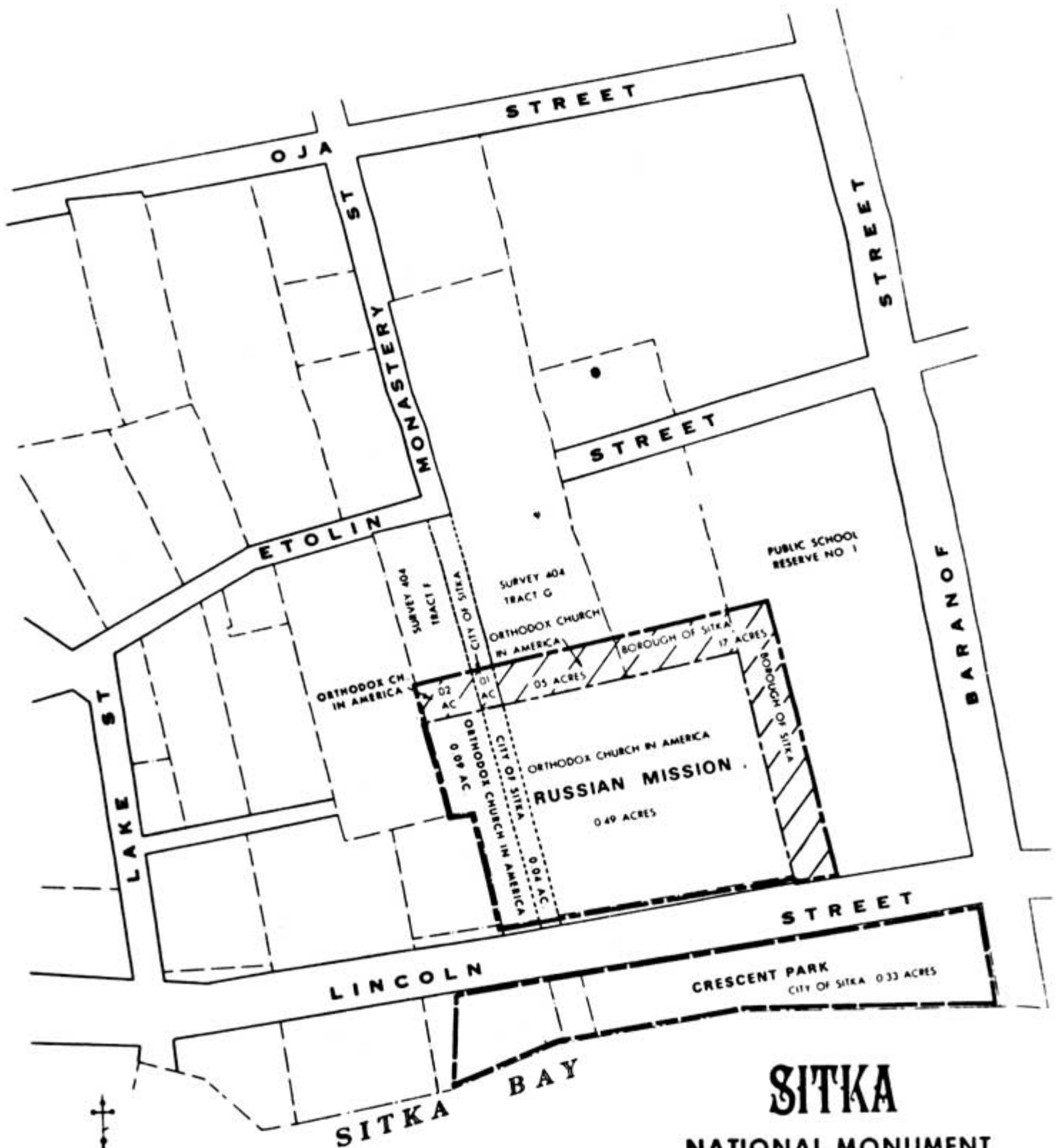
By: FRED PINSON CO.



EROSION CONTROL PROJECT
SITKA NATIONAL MONUMENT
1961







LAND OWNERSHIP



MONUMENT BDRY (PROPOSED) ————

PROPOSED EASEMENT



SITKA

NATIONAL MONUMENT
SITKA ALASKA

**RUSSIAN MISSION
PROPOSED ADDITION**

SHEET 2 OF 2

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