

DRAFT

Survey and Evaluation of the  
Iditarod Trail & Connecting Trails  
in the Chugach National Forest

PHASE I EVALUATION FORM

Kurt Schweigert

March, 1991

1. Name of Property: Johnson Trail Cabins C7
2. Location: SW/NE/SW Section 33, T6N-R1E, SM.  
Seward C-7 Quadrangle
3. Classification:
  - Ownership: Public-federal
  - Category of Property: Buildings (Ruins)
  - Number of Resources within Property:
    - Contributing: 2 Buildings
    - Non-Contributing: 0
  - Number of Contributing Resources previously listed: 0
  - Name of related multiple property listing: Iditarod Trail, Connecting Trails, and Associated Properties Within the Chugach National Forest.
6. Function or Use:
  - Historic Functions: Domestic/Camp/Way Station
  - Current Functions: Not in Use
7. Description:

This property consists of remains of two log structures and a probable corral area on the Johnson Pass Government Road. The buildings appear to have been used as a rest stop for travellers on the road, and the road bisects the site area just to the south of a small gulch drainage.

Feature 1 is a log structure, probably a domicile, which has up to six tiers of logs remaining. Logs are saddle-notched at corners and are unhewn and unpeeled. Some logs are axe beveled at both ends, but most logs are sawn. One piece of 2"x6" milled lumber was observed, which contains round wire nails. The cabin is about 3.89 meters by 4.41 meters. The interior contains remains of many small poles which appear to have been roof members, either from original construction or from later use as a hunting shelter. The interior also contains metal buckets and cans, and a scatter of cans is to the west and southwest of the structure.

Feature 2 is remains of a log structure, probably a barn, located 320 degrees and 35 meters from the northwest corner of Feature 1. The structure is 5.3 meters by 5.98 meters and is oriented with the apparent entry on a short side facing 250 degrees west. Up to four tiers of saddle-notched logs remain. The structure and its immediate surroundings contain stovepipe, sheet metal, small poles, and round wire nails. Adjacent to the west of Feature 2 is a clearing surrounded by what appears to

be a pole rail fence; this area is assumed to have been a corral.

The logs of both structures are rotted and weathered, and the nature and degree of disintegration of artifacts indicates these structures were built and occupied during the period of active use and maintenance of the trail (ca. 1905-1920).

8. Statement of Significance:

Significance Level: Local/State

Applicable Criteria: A

Areas of Significance: Transportation

Period of Significance: 1906-1912

Significant Dates:

Significant Person:

Architect/Builder:

State significance of property:

Facilities at this site provided shelter for travelers over the Johnson Pass Military Road (SEW-366). In October, 1906 the Seward Weekly Gateway carried an announcement of construction of cabins on the trail.

Anton Eide is building two cabins on Johnson creek trail to afford shelter to mail carriers during the winter. Mr. Eide again has the contract for carrying the winter mail to Sunrise, from November to March inclusive (Seward Weekly Gateway 10/20/1906).

Ed Estes, a long-time resident of the region and former dogsled mail carrier over the Johnson Pass trail, identified these cabins as a "stopover cabin" on the mail route (Estes 1981). The date of abandonment of this site for that purpose is unknown, but most mail went over the Moose Pass Military Road beginning in 1912, and mail service was discontinued over the Johnson Pass Trail before 1921 (Estes 1981).

This property does not appear to be individually eligible under any of the National Register criteria, because it has limited historical associations and relatively poor integrity. It is recommended to be eligible under Criterion A as an element of the multiple property group "Iditarod Trail, Connecting Trails, and Associated Properties Within the Chugach National Forest." This property is clearly associated with a major function of the early trail system, the transportation of mail. This property is the only recorded example of structures built to provide shelter for dogsled mail carriers on the trail

system within the Chugach National Forest.

9. Major Bibliographic References:

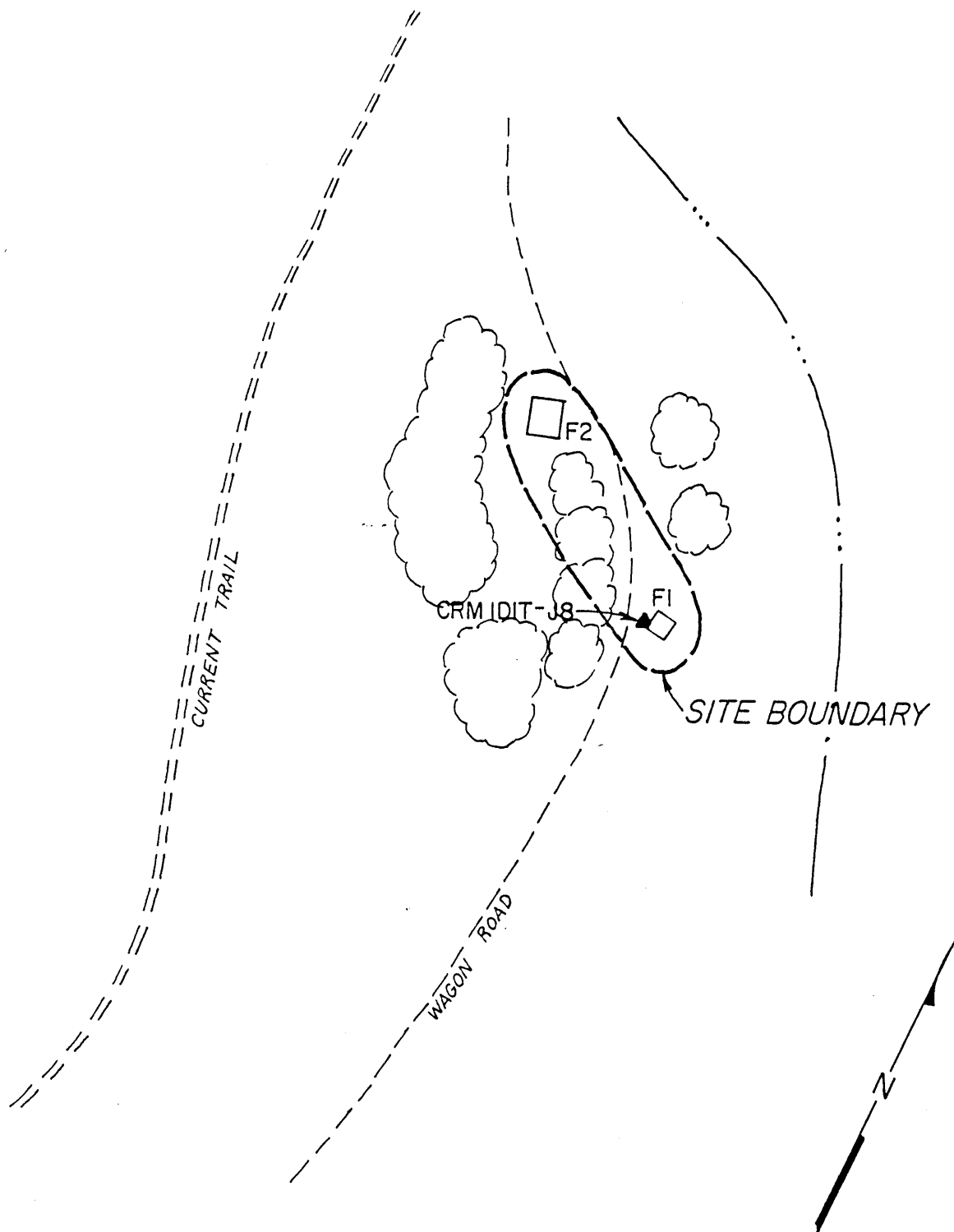
Estes, Ed

1981 Interview at Moose Pass, Alaska, June 15, 1981. On file at Bureau of Land Management Anchorage District office, Anchorage, Alaska.

Seward Weekly Gateway, "Building Cabins on Trail," October 20, 1906.

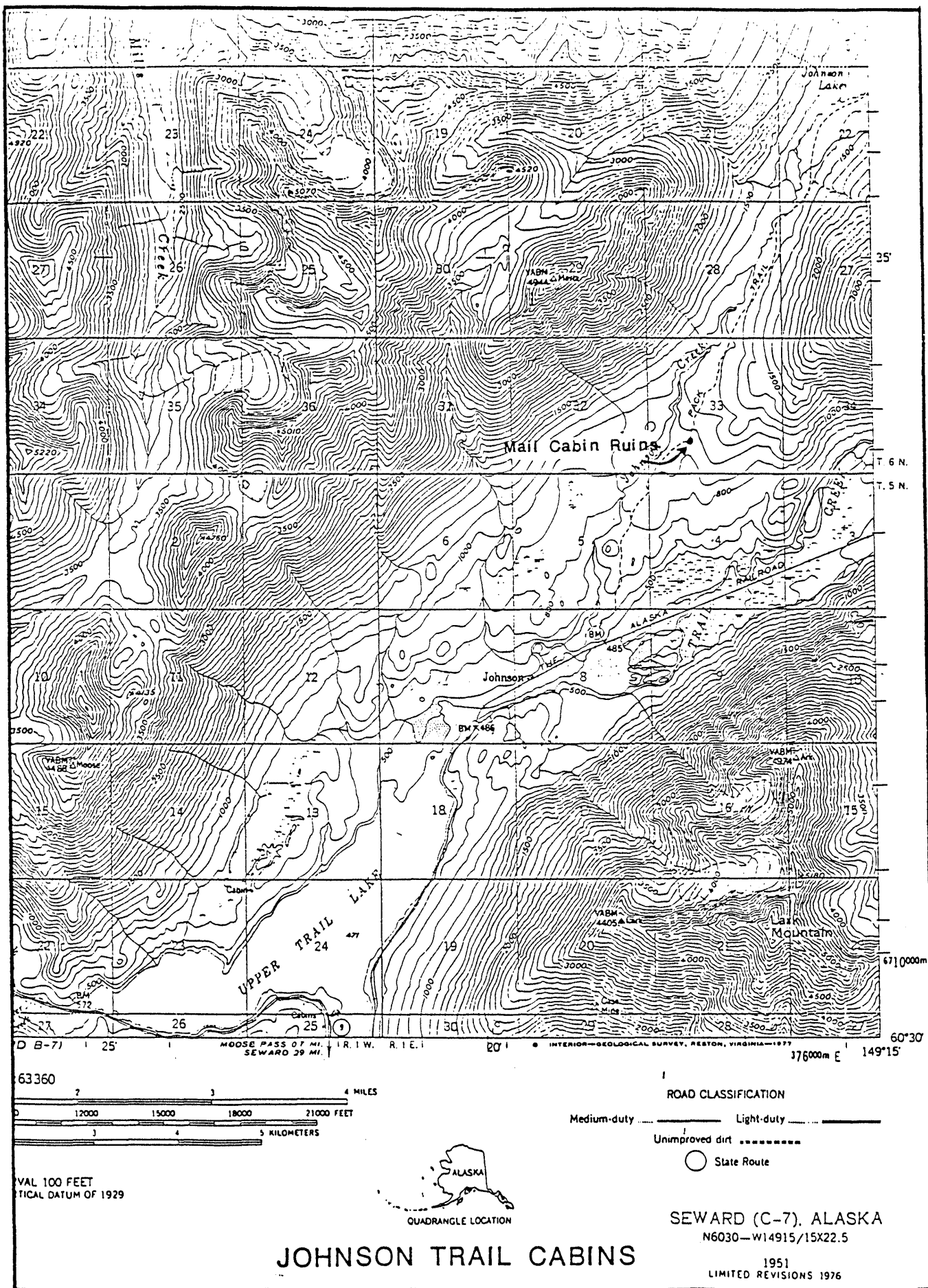
Schweigert, Kurt P.

1991 Survey and Evaluation of the Iditarod Trail and Connecting Trails in the Chugach National Forest. Report prepared for U.S. Forest Service, Chugach National Forest, Anchorage, Alaska.



0 30 M

CRM 327-4  
CABIN SITE



JOHNSON TRAIL CABINS



Feature 1, Dwelling Cabin, View to SE



Feature 1, Dwelling Cabin, View to SW

JOHNSON TRAIL CABINS



Feature 2, Log Structure, View to NW



Feature 2, Log Structure, View to SE