

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
 NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM
 FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY
 RECEIVED AUG 12 1987
 DATE ENTERED SEP 23 1987

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
 TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Fairhaven Ditch

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Deering

VICINITY OF

STATE

Alaska

CODE

02

COUNTY

Nome District

CODE

180

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
 CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
			<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (if applicable)

STREET & NUMBER

National Park Service, Alaska Regional Office

CITY, TOWN

2525 Gambell St. Room 107

STATE

Anchorage

VICINITY OF

Alaska 99503

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
 REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

District Recorder

STREET & NUMBER

Box 431

CITY, TOWN

Nome

STATE

Alaska 99762

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Alaska Heritage Resource Survey (AHRs)

DATE

May 27, 1987

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
 SURVEY RECORDS

Alaska Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (OHA)

CITY, TOWN

Anchorage

STATE
 Alaska

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT DETERIORATED
 GOOD RUINS
 FAIR UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Fairhaven Ditch is located [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The largest ditch on the Seward Peninsula, Fairhaven Ditch was just over thirty-eight miles long, measured eleven feet wide at the bottom and eighteen feet wide at the top, and had banks that were sometimes as much as four feet high.

The ditch was in use until the middle of the second decade of this century. Deterioration has naturally taken place over the years--the banks have narrowed to less than two feet [REDACTED] and have widened to considerably more than eighteen feet in places; the 500-foot-long dam [REDACTED] is still visible, although presently heavily grown over; only remains of a water-control device on the upper section are visible today; and supporting structures for pipes such as those near [REDACTED] have collapsed. Nevertheless, the basic features which contribute to the historical significance of the ditch remain.

Buildings Associated with Fairhaven Ditch

1. Located approximately [REDACTED] this cabin presumably functioned as a construction/maintenance structure. It is a fifteen-by-twenty-one-foot plank, gable-roofed structure with a six-by-nine-foot shed entryway. One-by-three-inch battens held canvas and tar paper covering. One wooden bed frame remains inside and debris outside--reindeer skulls and bones, C-ration cans, for example--indicate continued and varied use.
2. Cabins. Two cabins stand at [REDACTED]. One is a fifteen-by-eighteen-long gable-roofed plank structure, with battens used for attaching tar paper. Inside are nine bed frames attached to the walls, remains of a stove and bearproof food box.

The second cabin is of similar construction and measures fifteen-by-eighteen feet. Three wooden bed frames remain inside as does a stove with the name "Langs Alaska, 1923". Boards are marked "F. Mining Co. Deering" and a paper on a window is dated August 23, 1910. Telephone insulators are attached to the outside wall, as is what appears to be a wood frame.

Debris outside the cabins includes remains of a stove and sled.

3. Collapsed remains of two structures remain at [REDACTED]

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1905-ca. 1920

BUILDER/ARCHITECT C. L. Morris, Fairhaven Water Co.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Fairhaven Ditch was the largest of more than 500 miles of ditch constructed on the Seward Peninsula to carry water to placer mines during the height of the gold rush during the first decade of the twentieth century. Built to overcome a too-limited supply of water, Fairhaven Ditch is significant as a remarkable feat of engineering--the ditch ~~was~~ carried water more than thirty-eight miles through mostly lava rock and permafrost to allow full exploitation of the gold mines of the [REDACTED]. The ditch remains as a monument to engineering accomplishments in the harsh arctic environment. It reminds us of the excitement of that colorful time when the eyes of a fascinated world focused on northwest Alaska and is silent testimony to the ingenuity and hard work of the men and women who searched for gold in what can be one of the most inhospitable and isolated environments on earth.

HISTORY

The discovery of gold near present-day Nome, Alaska in August 1898 soon brought as many as 20,000 people to the Seward Peninsula in search of their fortunes. By 1900 the miners who had swarmed into the new mining camp had exhausted the sands on the beaches near Nome and had begun to do the same to the easiest-worked creek and bench placers. Though small, independent miners would continue to work their placers across the peninsula for years to come, real success would depend upon improved methods and large-scale operations.(1)

Water supply on the semi-arid Seward Peninsula, where annual precipitation rarely exceeds ten inches a year, few natural reservoirs exist to capture what water there is, and too gentle slopes and low grades of creek valleys prevent high pressure from developing, would not support the large-scale hydraulic mining. Men with valuable lands and sufficient capital turned to ditches to supply the water necessary.(2)

In 1901 W.L. Leland and J.M. Davidson designed and began construction on the Miocene Ditch to carry water to the claims along [REDACTED]. Encouraged by their success, others followed. By 1909 forty-two ditches carried more than 52,000 inches of water a total of 569 miles, something that led one observer to exclaim: "If death will covenant with me that I may 'die in the last ditch' constructed in Northwestern Alaska I will measure my life by centuries."(3)

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Representative of the ditches on the peninsula is Fairhaven Ditch, which runs approximately [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Gold had been discovered on the [REDACTED] and other drainages of the northeastern Seward Peninsula in 1900-1901. In 1905 the owners of Fairhaven Water Company commissioned C.L. Morris, an engineer from Seattle with considerable experience in ditch construction on the Seward Peninsula, to survey and construct a ditch that would carry water from [REDACTED]

(4)

Morris surveyed in 1905 and commenced work in 1906. During that summer, the 100 men in his employ built a 500-foot-long by five-foot-high dam across the [REDACTED] to conserve run-off, the seventeen-mile-long upper section that ran through a lava formation from [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Completion came the following July with the construction of the remaining half of the lower section, the half-mile-long middle section, installation of 10,600 feet of pressure pipe leading from the [REDACTED] to the mines and a diversion dam and waste ditch at the mines. (5)

Construction of Fairhaven Ditch was a remarkable accomplishment. Men worked in a climate that can be hot one moment, cold and rainy the next. All the time they would have worked amid almost unimaginable swarms of vicious insects. The ditch, which was among the longest on the peninsula, was eleven feet wide at the bottom and ran seemingly endlessly through lava formations, and permafrost across the barren landscape. In fact, practically all of the upper ditch and at least three-fourths of the lower ditch ran through permafrost. When the top layer of earth was removed and water run through the ditch the ice below melted and the bottom settled at least two feet in most places and the banks widened as much as fifteen or twenty feet. Fine material carried along by the water was redeposited along the sides and bottom, forming a tight lining. Measurement showed that nearly all the water turned into the intake was delivered at the mines, nearly forty miles away. In fact, when the ditch was opened in September 1907, it was necessary to add a second penstock to reduce the pressure [REDACTED]

(6)

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The editors of the Alaska-Yukon Magazine predicted, in 1907, that completion of Fairhaven Ditch would make the Fairhaven Water Company the largest "shippers of gold from this section for a number of years." Whether this prediction was fulfilled is impossible to say as the company refused to give out the amount of gold taken by them. There seems to be little question, however, that Fairhaven Ditch allowed for the full exploitation of the company's claims on the [REDACTED]. There mines were, according to one observer, located on the best placer streams in Alaska, and they reputedly took out \$90,000 from one cut. Total output of gold from the Fairhaven District was \$415,000 from 1901-1903. After the Fairhaven Ditch opened, in 1908, the mines on the [REDACTED] produced as much as \$500,000 themselves. By 1930 the mines of the Fairhaven District had produced a total of \$5,727,100. (7)

Production trailed off rapidly, however. The records do not indicate exactly when the company stopped using Fairhaven Ditch. As late as 1918, the company operated a dredge on the [REDACTED] but two years later reported that their claims had played out. Although the ditch was clearly not in use at that time, it was still in sound condition. The company sold the smaller pipe to people living [REDACTED] but left the large pipe (24-30 inches) on the ground. (8)

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_____. Past Gold Placer-Gold Production from Alaska, by Philip
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_____. Surface Water Supply of Seward Peninsula, Alaska, by Fred F. Henshaw and G.L. Parker. USGS Water Supply Paper 314. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1913.

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2. Fred Henshaw, "Mining in the Fairhaven Precinct," in U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Geological Survey, Report on Progress of Investigations of Mineral Resources of Alaska in 1908, by Alfred H. Brooks, et. al., U.S. Geological Survey Bulletin 379 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1909), pp. 370-71; U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, "A Historical Overview Seward Peninsula-Kotzebue Sound Area," by Melody Webb Grauman (Anchorage: National Park Service, 1977), pp. 102-04.
3. U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Geological Survey, Water Supply Investigations in Alaska, 1906-07, Nome and Kougarak Regions, Seward Peninsula, Fairbanks District, Yukon-Tanana Region, by Fred E. Henshaw and C.C. Covert, USGS Water Supply Paper 196 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1907), pp. 24-26; U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Geological Survey, Water Supply of Nome Region, Seward Peninsula, 1906, by John C. Hoyt and Fred F. Henshaw, USGS Water Supply Paper 196 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1907), p. 94; U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, Alaska's Northwest Region: A History, by James H. Ducker (Anchorage: Bureau of Land Management, 1985), p. 34; James H. Kelly, "Ditch Construction on the Seward Peninsula," Proceedings of the Pacific Northwest Society of Engineers, 6 (September 1907), pp. 20-34; "Seward Peninsula Ditches," Alaska-Yukon Magazine, 7 (March 1909), p. 553; E.S. Harrison "Nome Ditches," Alaska Magazine, 2 (January 1905), p. 30.
4. Arthur Rush, "Canal Morris Leads a Strenuous Life," Alaska Magazine, 2 (1905), pp. 30-31.

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5. Henshaw and Covert, Water Supply Investigations in Alaska, 1907, p. 99; "Mining in Fairhaven Precinct," pp. 358-60; U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Geological Survey, Surface Water Supply of Seward Peninsula, Alaska, by Fred F. Henshaw and G.L. Parker, USGS Water Supply Paper 314 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1913), p. 235; Alicia Godfrey, "The Seward Peninsula Gold Rush," Typescript 1975, History/Archeology, BELA Keyman Files, Alaska Task Force Files, Record Group 79, Federal Archives and Records Center, Seattle Washington.
6. Henshaw and Parker, Surface Water Supply of Seward Peninsula, pp. 235-36; "Mining in Fairhaven Precinct," pp. 359-60; Godfrey, "Seward Peninsula Gold Rush," p. 11.
7. "Ditch Construction at Nome." Alaska Magazine, 4 (December 1907), p. 287; U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Geological Survey, Fairhaven Gold Placers, Seward Peninsula, Alaska, by Fred H. Moffit, USGS Bulletin 247 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1905), p. 66; U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Geological Survey, Past Placer-Gold Production from Alaska, by Philip Smith, USGS Bulletin 857-B (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1933), p. 96.
8. Williss, "Its a hard country, though," p. 191.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See continuation sheet.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 4969

UTM REFERENCES

A	<u>[REDACTED]</u>	<u>[REDACTED]</u>	<u>[REDACTED]</u>
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	<u>[REDACTED]</u>	<u>[REDACTED]</u>	<u>[REDACTED]</u>

B	<u>[REDACTED]</u>	<u>[REDACTED]</u>	<u>[REDACTED]</u>
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
D	<u>[REDACTED]</u>	<u>[REDACTED]</u>	<u>[REDACTED]</u>

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
-------	------	--------	------

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
-------	------	--------	------

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Frank Williss Historian

ORGANIZATION

National Park Service Denver Service Center

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

755 Parfet

TELEPHONE

236-8610

CITY OR TOWN

Lakewood

STATE

Colorado 80225

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES

NO

NONE

Judith E. Biltman
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is National State Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

Edwin [Signature]

TITLE

Chief Historian

DATE

July 17, 1987

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

William B. Beahm
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

9/23/87

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER