

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 95001572

Date Listed: 1/19/96

North Fork Road
Property Name

Flathead
County

MT
State

Glacier National Park MPS
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

P. R. Lugin

Signature of the Keeper

1/19/96
Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

Resource Count:

The resource count should read:
one (1) contributing structure (roadway)

This information was confirmed with Kathy McKoy of the NPS.

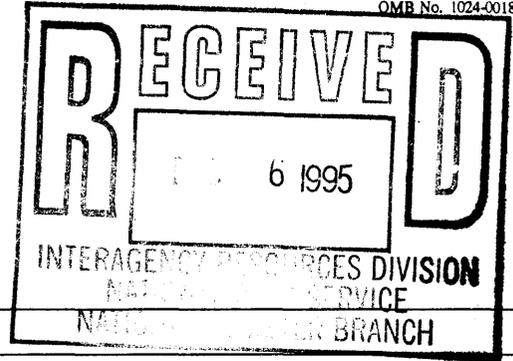
DISTRIBUTION:

National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

1572

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM



1. Name of Property

historic name: North Fork Road

other name/site number: Flathead River Road/Glacier Route 7

2. Location

street & number: Glacier Route 7

not for publication: n/a

vicinity: North Fork drainage, Fish Creek to Kintla Lake; Glacier National Park (GLAC)

city/town: West Glacier

state: Montana code: MT

county: Flathead code: 29

zip code: 59936

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

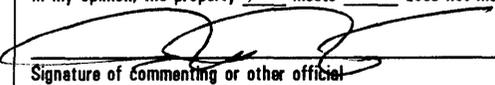
As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 38 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ___ nationally ___ statewide X locally. (___ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)


Signature of certifying official/Title

12.5.95
Date

National Park Service
State or Federal agency or bureau

In my opinion, the property 1 meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.


Signature of commenting or other official

SEP 29 1995
Date

State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
see continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register
see continuation sheet
- determined not eligible for the National Register
see continuation sheet
- removed from the National Register
see continuation sheet
- other (explain)

Signature of the Keeper Entered in the Date of Action
National Register



1/19/96

Name of Property

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property: Public-Federal

Category of Property: Structure

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing: Glacier National Park Multiple Property Listing

Number of Resources within Property		
Contributing	Noncontributing	
_____	_____	building(s)
1	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
1	_____	Total

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions:

Government, Transportation/truck trail, wagon road

Current Function:

Government, Transportation/roadway

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

N/A

Materials:

foundation: N/A

walls: N/A

roof: N/A

other: gravel road bed

Narrative Description

The North Fork Road extends approximately 40 miles from its southernmost point at the Fish Creek Campground north to the foot of Kintla Lake, 4.5 miles from the Canadian border. The road hugs the southwest terminus of the Livingston Range roughly parallel to the North Fork of the Flathead River. It is unpaved its entire length, with an average width of 20', narrowing notably to 15' at the northern end of Big Prairie for the final four miles to Kintla Lake. Through much its distance, the road passes through second-growth timber dominated by larch, Douglas fir, lodgepole pine and occasional stands of old-growth ponderosa. This landscape is altered sharply within the 1987 Red Bench Fire area (approximately 5 miles, between Quartz Creek and Akokala [Indian] Creek), where gaunt stands of fire-killed timber allow views of the rolling landscape and occasional views of the mountains. Fire visited the North Fork in 1910, 1919, and again in 1929; this "burnscape" is not inconsistent with the historic landscape.

Glimpses of the meadows along which homesteaders concentrated are granted infrequently until the road enters the six mile expanse of Big Prairie. Associated structures are rare: a modern metal guardrail protects the overlook of the North Fork of the Flathead River, south of the Polebridge Ranger Station, and metal culvert drains bottom lands. Bridges across the numerous tributaries of the North Fork of the Flathead River are simple plank structures, all of which postdate the 1964 flood.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

Applicable National Register Criteria: A

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

Significant Person(s): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Areas of Significance: Government; Transportation

Period(s) of Significance: 1935-1945

Significant Dates: N/A

Architect/Builder: National Park Service, Branch of Plans and Design

Narrative Statement of Significance

The North Fork Road is eligible for listing on the NRHP, at the local level of significance, for its association with park administration and development of the North Fork region (criterion A; NR area of significance: Government, Transportation). All bridges postdate the 1964 flood and have not been evaluated as contributing structures. Although constructed in 1901, the years 1935-1945 have been defined as the road's period of significance; during these years the road assumed roughly its current design standards, greatly exceeding those of the homestead era yet still sufficiently crude to act as the defining influence on the relatively undeveloped character of the North Fork region. The road is a component of the Circulation Systems property type as defined in the Glacier National Park Multiple Property Listing.

In 1901, the Butte Oil Company constructed a rough wagon road from the foot of Lake McDonald to its oil well at the foot of Kintla Lake. This "Flathead River Road" forms the basic route of what is now known as the North Fork Road or Glacier Route #7. Loggers, trappers, and subsistence farmers followed the miners, often settling on or logging land adjacent to or easily accessible from this sole means of access into the rugged and remote North Fork drainage. These same men and women were responsible for road construction, maintenance, and repair, even after creation of Glacier National Park when park superintendents found themselves fiscally unable to respond to settlers' demands for improved access. Despite local efforts, the "road" barely deserved the title: At Anaconda Hill, it "just came straight up the hill and then straight down." Heavily loaded cars and wagons were let down with a cable and proceeded across Christensen and Sullivan meadows on log corduroy. Stumps remained in the right of way and spring rains created a forty mile stretch of quicksand.

In 1914, park crews installed new culverts and removed rocks and stumps from an unidentified five miles of the North Fork Road. By 1916, NPS officials reported that the road was in good condition from Fish Creek to McGee Meadows following the construction of corduroy and drainage ditches and the removal of stumps. The "remainder of the road was kept free from fallen timber and repaired in such places as was necessary to permit its use by horse drawn vehicles." Between 1918 and 1940, despite seasonal repairs, the park superintendent repeated variations of the claim that the road was "practically impossible for automobiles to get over ... and difficult even for team travel."

Following a 1926 excursion to the North Fork, journalist Agnes C. Laut described the journey from Belton to Kintla as:

about 60 miles as the crow flies. But the car does not travel as the crow flies Here's a bad bit of black forest muck in the road. You wiggle round a detour, here's another section that has to be regraded, rock blasted out to reduce the steepness of the climb Here's a lap of the highway at which my young stoic driver remarked, "I call that steep." So did I -- steep as a telegraph pole [Anaconda Hill].

That same year, park superintendent Charles Kraeble argued that the road would have to be completely reconstructed.

9. Major Bibliographic References

Elrod, Morton J. *Elrod's Guide and Book of Information of Glacier National Park*. Self Published, Missoula, Mt. c. 1929.

Laut, Agnes C. *Enchanted Trails of Glacier Park*. New York: Robert M. McBride & Co., 1926.

Newell, Alan S., David Walter, and James R. McDonald. *Historic Resources Study, Glacier National Park and Historic Structures Survey* (Vol. I). Denver, Colorado: National Park Service, Denver Service Center, 1980.

USDI NPS, Blueprints and Drawings Number: NP-GLA 3025-1; NP-GLA 5060; NP-GLA 5482; NP-GLA 8040; NP-GLA117/3-670, on file at the NPS Denver Service Center Technical Information Center, Denver, Colorado.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: approximately 199 acres

UTM References:	Zone	Easting	Northing
Point A (Fish Creek)	12	279600	5381311
Point B (Kintla Lake)	11	694370	5423470

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary incorporates the approximately 40-mile roadbed, at an average width of 20', and 10 feet to either side of each shoulder (creating a 40'-wide corridor).

Boundary Justification

These boundaries correspond to the area of historical development.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Ann Hubber/Historian
 organization: Historical Research Associates, Inc. date: 6/1995
 street & number: P.O. Box 7086 telephone: (406) 721-1958
 city or town: Missoula state: MT zip code: 59807-7086

Property Owner

name/title: National Park Service
 street & number: Park Headquarters telephone: (406)888-5441
 city or town: West Glacier state: MT zip code: 59936

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1 North Fork Road, Flathead County, MT.

In the 1930s, using ECW funds, the NPS reconstructed the road in the vicinity of Anaconda Hill. The road was also rerouted to the west of Christensen and Sullivan Meadows, thus bypassing both perennially boggy sections of road and a number of historic homesteads. In 1940, NPS crews, using plans provided by the Branch of Engineering, reconstructed approximately 1600 feet of the southern approach to Kintla Creek. The road dropped 300' down the hillside, thus avoiding a 20% grade and was rerouted to cross the creek approximately 50' upstream from the original bridge, thus avoiding a sharp 90-degree turn just prior to the creek approach. This improvement program was requested in the 1933 Master Plan -- the "new" road was ultimately to connect with a Canadian route over Pass, thus creating a continuous road loop around the park.

By the 1950s, the realignment was essentially complete yet plans for a link to Canada apparently abandoned. The 1961 Master Plan reported that while "the road needs some improvement in the interest of visitor safety and realignment in several places ... geometrical standards should remain low." This philosophy continues to be adhered to: the road remains gravel, graded to a standard width of approximately 20' to the north end of Big Prairie, and 15' to the foot of Kintla Lake. Bridges remain too narrow, corners too sharp, and visibility too limited for large vehicles or high speeds. While wagons would find the journey effortless (and neither winches, horses, nor four-wheel drive are requisite), the road is the only narrow and unpaved primary route within the park. As park officials intended, these "geometric standards" have assured that the North Fork remains a "Primitive Area," without concession-run accommodations, visitor centers, or the crowds increasingly associated with our national parks.

The road in its current condition represents both a concerted effort on the part of the NPS to improve the North Fork transportation network (1930s and 1940s) and subsequent efforts to limit those improvements (1950-1960). Decisions regarding the road's characteristics to a large extent defined the administrative discussion regarding use and development of the North Fork region; the road is therefore eligible for listing in the NRHP under criterion A for its association with park administration and development.

The road's historical characteristics and the extent to which it formed a critical link in what was otherwise a scattered community are no longer easily discernible: many of the homesteads have been dismantled and the road has been rerouted away from the sites of the homesteads and roadside infrastructure (including post offices, a general store, and roadhouses) that once dotted Sullivan and Christensen Meadows and the east edge of Big Prairie. The road retains insufficient physical integrity to be associated with the pre-1935 private development of the North Fork region.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Photographs Page 2 North Fork Road, Flathead County, MT.

Photographs

The following information applies to all photographs listed below:

- 1) Photographer: Ann Hubber 2) Date of Photographs: September 1993 3) Location of Negatives:
National Park Service, RMR-
RC, Denver, CO.

PHOTO NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	DIRECTION OF VIEW
7	near junction with Anaconda Creek	View to SE
8	.2 mile southeast of Polebridge Ranger Station	View to SSE
9	near River Campground/Big Prairie	View to N

Additional Documentation

The following blueprints and site plans can be found at the NPS Denver Service Center, Technical Information Center, Denver, Colorado.

North Fork Road

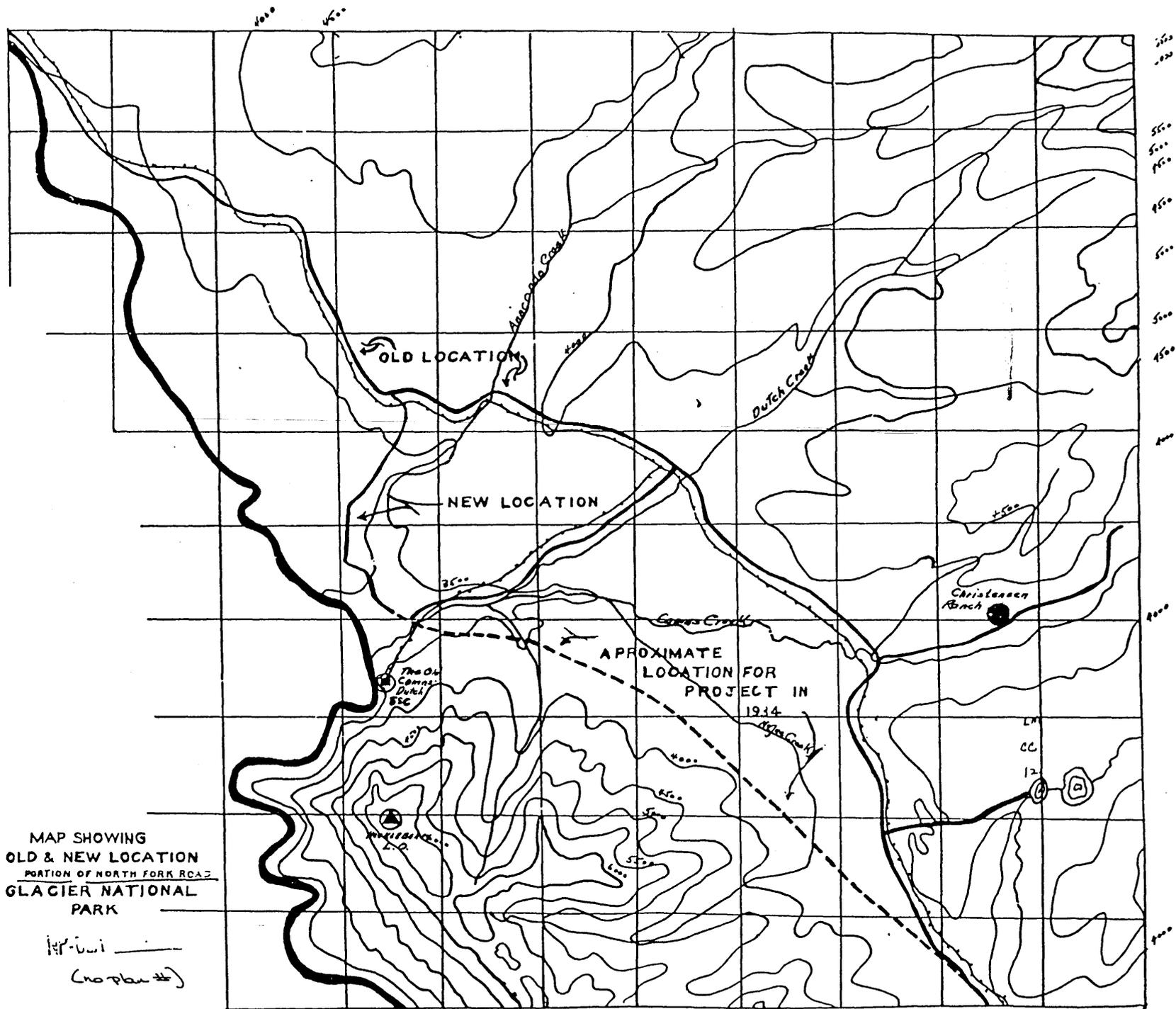
UTM References:

	Zone	Easting	Northing
Point A (Fish Creek)	12	279600	5381311
Point B (Kintla Lake)	11	694370	5423470

**North Fork Road
(Glacier Route 7)**

reduced from USDI Geological Survey
of Glacier National Park (1968)
1:100,000





MAP SHOWING
 OLD & NEW LOCATION
 PORTION OF NORTH FORK ROAD
 GLACIER NATIONAL
 PARK

NP-661
 (no plan #)

REDUCED SIZE REPRODUCTION

NP-GLA

51 7



#7

RT Drainage

Class RT 7

AND

Headhead Co ms



8

1/2 Drainage

Casini # 7

and

Headhead 60 mi



to

The drawing

shows the

and

the head of the