
National Park Service
Cultural Landscapes Inventory

2004



Keys Ranch Historic District
Joshua Tree National Park



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Joshua Tree National Park
74485 National Park Drive
Twentynine Palms, California 92277-3597

IN REPLY REFER TO:

H3019 (JOTR-RM)

November 4, 1999

Memorandum

To: Superintendent, Joshua Tree National Park

From: Superintendent, Pacific Great Basin System Support Office

Subject: Draft Level II Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI) Analysis

Thank you for submitting the draft level II cultural landscape inventory for the Desert Queen Ranch, Cow Camp, and Barker Dam to the park. The document has been reviewed by the park's cultural resources manager, Jan Keswick, and comments sent directly to Kimball Koch. Your staff had done a commendable and professional job in researching and documenting the landscape and we concur with the findings as a whole.

Specifically, we agree with the designation of "Management Category B", "*Should be preserved and maintained*" and the condition assessment of "fair" for the ranch district. Attached please find the signed approval form.

Ernest Quintana

Enclosures (1)

cc: Jan Keswick, JOTR Branch Chief of Cultural Resources w/enclosure

KEYS RANCH HISTORIC DISTRICT
JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL PARK

California SHPO Eligibility Determination

Section 110 Actions Requested:

- 1) SHPO concurrence with the boundary revision related to the consolidation of three existing National Register Districts (Keys Desert Queen Ranch, Cow Camp and Barker Dam Historic Districts) into one larger historic district: the Keys Ranch Historic District.
- 2) SHPO concurrence with the addition of structures to the List of Classified Structures (LCS). (See chart below)

 I concur, **Additional information is needed to concur,**
 I do not concur with the proposed boundary expansion for the Keys Ranch Historic District as described in the Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI).

 I concur, **Additional information is needed to concur,**
 I do not concur that the **Setting** as described in the CLI contributes to the Keys Ranch Historic District (see the following landscape characteristics: natural systems and features, spatial organization, topography, vegetation, cluster arrangement, and views and vistas). SEE COMMENTS

The following structures, located within the proposed historic district, are already listed on the National Register as contributing elements of the existing historic districts (no concurrence required):

LCS number	Structure Name
058511	Adobe Pit and Winch
009466	Barker Dam
009468	Barker Dam Catchment Basin
009469	Barker Dam Stone Stock Watering Trough
009467	Barker Dam Wooden Watering Trough
005605	Cow Camp Chimney
005604	Cow Camp Dam
008215	Keys Ranch Adobe Fireplace Ruin
005598	Keys Ranch Arched Dam
005586	Keys Ranch Arrastra
056330	Keys Ranch Cave Shelter
005580	Keys Ranch Chicken Coop
058510	Keys Ranch Crane
005595	Keys Ranch Dam Behind North House
005593	Keys Ranch Dam SE of Ranch House
005581	Keys Ranch Disney Shed
005578	Keys Ranch Girls' Outhouse

LCS number	Structure Name
005583	Keys Ranch Guest House
005599	Keys Ranch Huntington Mill
005600	Keys Ranch Joshua Tree Fence
058507	Keys Ranch Joshua Tree Sculpture
005588	Keys Ranch Machine Shed
005575	Keys Ranch Main House
005579	Keys Ranch Men's Outhouse
005594	Keys Ranch North House
005596	Keys Ranch North House Double Outhouse
005597	Keys Ranch North House Single outhouse
005589	Keys Ranch Ore Hopper
005601	Keys Ranch Retaining Wall
005584	Keys Ranch Schoolhouse
005577	Keys Ranch Shed
005592	Keys Ranch South House
005576	Keys Ranch Storehouse
005582	Keys Ranch Tack House
005590	Keys Ranch Water Tower
058509	Keys Ranch Well Near House
005587	Keys Ranch West House Ruins
005591	Keys Ranch Windmill
009465	Meyers Dam Ruin

Based on the information provided in the CLI, the following previously unevaluated structures have been identified as **contributing** to the Keys Ranch Historic District:

LCS number	Structure Name	Built	Concur	Do not Concur
274577	Cow Camp Rock Alignment	1870-1920	X	
274658	Cow Camp Small Dam	1870-1920	X	
274598	Cow Camp Stock Watering Trough	1870-1920	X	
274600	Cow Camp Well	1870-1920	X	
056044	Keys Ranch 5-Stamp Mill Ruin	1917	X	
056010	Keys Ranch Boundary Fences	1920-1930		X
056043	Keys Ranch Chilean Mill Ruin	1917	X	
274607	Keys Ranch Corral Willow Fence	1914-1950	X	
056049	Keys Ranch Irrigation System	1914-1950	X	
274638	Keys Ranch One Stamp Mill	1914-1943	X	
056047	Keys Ranch Roads and Trails	1910-1930	X	

Based on the information provided in the CLI, the following previously unevaluated structures have been identified as **not contributing** to the Keys Ranch Historic District:

LCS number	Structure Name	Concur	Do not Concur
058506	Worth Bagley Stone *	X	
	Barker Dam Visitor Trail	X	
	Loop Road, Parking and Trail to the Comfort Station	X	
	Road, Parking Lot and trail to Barker Dam	X	
	Caretaker Recreational Vehicle	X	
	Comfort Station	X	
	Maintenance Shed	X	
	Visitor Parking Lot	X	
	Rock Piles (grave) in front of South School House	X	

*The Worth Bagley Stone is listed on the LCS because it is managed as a cultural resource by the park.

Reasons/comments why ‘Additional Information Is Needed To Concur’ or ‘Do Not Concur’ were checked:

Cultural Landscape Boundaries:

The evaluation makes a good case for the importance of the landscape setting of the Ranch. In fact, the landscape appears to be a crucial element in conveying the “ingenuity, work ethic and vision” that allowed Keyes and his family to build and maintain a ranch in such extreme natural and climatic conditions. While the three primary resource are on the ranch are clearly connected with one another by their development history, usage and function, they are geographically widely separated and physically separate from one another. Group them together into a single large cultural landscape district, necessitates a boundary that encompasses a large extent of land that is not directly related to any or all of the resource groups. While legal boundaries are sometimes contiguous with a defined cultural landscape, it is also possible that the legal boundaries encompass an area so large that the cultural landscape becomes indistinguishable from the broader natural setting.

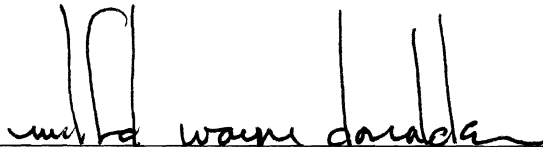
The interrelationship between Keyes ranching activities and their remaining physical manifestations involves specific and discrete locations within the broader landscape. Each of the resource groups is located in a very specific part of the larger desert landscape, in most cases, because of the presence of certain identifiable landscape features or natural resources, such as the boulder outcrops around the ranch complex which offered protection and shade, or the presence of canyon water that is controlled by Barker Dam. The “cultural landscape” is created by the interaction of the human-made resources and the specific portion of the desert landscape within which they exist, and which they function to modify. It does not necessarily include all of the land that Keyes once owned or even used. Although Keyes used large areas of land for grazing, there is no documentation of the physical remnants of this practice. The all encompassing approach to defining the cultural landscapes as coextensive with Keyes legal holdings is particularly evident in the analysis of topography which includes all of the valley floor, boulder canyons and dry creek washes as relevant aspects of the Keyes Ranch landscape. Such an approach tends to dilute the meaning of a cultural landscape as a landscape that is shaped in some fashion by human action and to confuse it with areas that have been far less identifiably altered by human occupation and use, and that we might term “natural.”

The boundary of the cultural landscape district needs to be more narrowly and specifically defined to address the interaction of historical resources and the surrounding land in which they exist and to consider where the “cultural landscape” ends and the natural, largely undisturbed landscape begins.

Consideration might be given to defining three interrelated cultural landscapes connected by the linear feature(s) (road, trail, natural passes) that permitted interaction among these physically distinct and separated ranch landscapes.

Period of Significance: The ranch is evaluated as significant under criteria A and C for its association with the Keyes and for its rustic vernacular ranch structures and buildings. However, the period of significance is extended back into the 19th century to include the period of McHaney occupation. There is no justification of McHaney's significance, nor are there any notable remains, beyond a few ruins, of that period of ranch history. The period of significance needs to reflect the period for which there are significant historic remains that convey the reasons for which the property is important. It would seem more appropriate to begin the period of significance with the beginning of Keyes activities on the property in 1910. Likewise, although Keyes continued to live on the property until his death in 1969, it might be more appropriate to end the period of significance with the last major construction or land alteration that he undertook.

Vegetation: The report indicates that there are only a few remaining plantings dating from Keyes occupation. The presence of field patterns and orchard areas contributes to the integrity of land use patterns, but is not the same as the continued physical presence of vegetation in the form of trees, shrubs, landscape plantings etc. The consideration of integrity of vegetation needs to be revisited and either more specifically documented, or reconsidered.



24 AUG 2004

California State Historic Preservation Officer

Date

Please return forms to the attention of:
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Cultural Landscape Program Lead-Oakland
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Pacific West Regional Office-Oakland
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Executive Summary

General Introduction to the CLI

The Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI) is a comprehensive inventory of all historically significant landscapes within the National Park System. This evaluated inventory identifies and documents each landscape's location, physical development, significance, National Register of Historic Places eligibility, condition, as well as other valuable information for park management. Inventoried landscapes are listed on, or eligible for, the National Register of Historic Places, or otherwise treated as cultural resources. To automate the inventory, the Cultural Landscapes Automated Inventory Management System (CLAIMS) database was created in 1996. CLAIMS provides an analytical tool for querying information associated with the CLI.

The CLI, like the List of Classified Structures (LCS), assists the National Park Service (NPS) in its efforts to fulfill the identification and management requirements associated with Section 110(a) of the National Historic Preservation Act, NPS Management Policies (2001), and Director's Order #28: Cultural Resource Management (1998). Since launching the CLI nationwide, the NPS, in response to the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), is required to report on an annual performance plan that is tied to 6-year strategic plan. The NPS strategic plan has two goals related to cultural landscapes: condition (1a7) and progress on the CLI (1b2b). Because the CLI is the baseline of cultural landscapes in the National Park System, it serves as the vehicle for tracking these goals.

For these reasons, the Park Cultural Landscapes Program considers the completion of the CLI to be a servicewide priority. The information in the CLI is useful at all levels of the park service. At the national and regional levels it is used to inform planning efforts and budget decisions. At the park level, the CLI assists managers to plan, program, and prioritize funds. It is a record of cultural landscape treatment and management decisions and the physical narrative may be used to enhance interpretation programs.

Implementation of the CLI is coordinated on the Region/Support Office level. Each Region/Support Office creates a priority list for CLI work based on park planning needs, proposed development projects, lack of landscape documentation (which adversely affects the preservation or management of the resource), baseline information needs and Region/Support office priorities. This list is updated annually to respond to changing needs and priorities. Completed CLI records are uploaded at the end of the fiscal year to the National Center for Cultural Resources, Park Cultural Landscapes Program in Washington, DC. Only data officially entered into the National Center's CLI database is considered "certified data" for GPRA reporting.

The CLI is completed in a multi-level process with each level corresponding to a specific degree of effort and detail. From Level 0: Park Reconnaissance Survey through Level II: Landscape Analysis and Evaluation, additional information is collected, prior information is refined, and decisions are made regarding if and how to proceed. The relationship between Level 0, I, and II is direct and the CLI for a landscape or component landscape inventory unit is not considered finished until Level II is complete.

A number of steps are involved in completing a Level II inventory record. The process begins when the CLI team meets with park management and staff to clarify the purpose of the CLI and is followed by historical research, documentation, and fieldwork. Information is derived from two efforts: secondary sources that are usually available in the park's or regions' files, libraries, and archives and on-site landscape investigation(s). This information is entered into CLI database as text or graphics. A park report is generated from the database and becomes the vehicle for consultation with the park and the

SHPO/TPO.

Level III: Feature Inventory and Assessment is a distinct inventory level in the CLI and is optional. This level provides an opportunity to inventory and evaluate important landscape features identified at Level II as contributing to the significance of a landscape or component landscape, not listed on the LCS. This level allows for an individual landscape feature to be assessed and the costs associated with treatment recorded.

The ultimate goal of the Park Cultural Landscapes Program is a complete inventory of landscapes, component landscapes, and where appropriate, associated landscape features in the National Park System. The end result, when combined with the LCS, will be an inventory of all physical aspects of any given property.

Relationship between the CLI and a CLR

While there are some similarities, the CLI Level II is not the same as a Cultural Landscape Report (CLR). Using secondary sources, the CLI Level II provides information to establish historic significance by determining whether there are sufficient extant features to convey the property's historic appearance and function. The CLI includes the preliminary identification and analysis to define contributing features, but does not provide the more definitive detail contained within a CLR, which involves more in-depth research, using primary rather than secondary source material.

The CLR is a treatment document and presents recommendations on how to preserve, restore, or rehabilitate the significant landscape and its contributing features based on historical documentation, analysis of existing conditions, and the Secretary of the Interior's standards and guidelines as they apply to the treatment of historic landscapes. The CLI, on the other hand, records impacts to the landscape and condition (good, fair, poor) in consultation with park management. Stabilization costs associated with mitigating impacts may be recorded in the CLI and therefore the CLI may advise on simple and appropriate stabilization measures associated with these costs if that information is not provided elsewhere.

When the park decides to manage and treat an identified cultural landscape, a CLR may be necessary to work through the treatment options and set priorities. A historical landscape architect can assist the park in deciding the appropriate scope of work and an approach for accomplishing the CLR. When minor actions are necessary, a CLI Level II park report may provide sufficient documentation to support the Section 106 compliance process.

Park Information

Park Name: Joshua Tree National Park
Administrative Unit: Joshua Tree National Park
Park Organization Code: 8330
Park Alpha Code: JOTR

Property Level And CLI Number

Property Level: Landscape
Name: Keys Ranch Historic District
CLI Identification Number: 725029
Parent Landscape CLI ID Number: 725029

Inventory Summary

Inventory Level: Level II

Completion Status:

Level 0

Date Data Collected - Level 0: 2/12/1998
Level 0 Recorder: Rick Dorrance
Date Level 0 Entered: 2/12/1998
Level 0 Data Entry Recorder: Rick Dorrance
Level 0 Site Visit: Yes

Level II

Date Level II Data Collected: 11/30/1999
Level II Data Collection: Koch, Luellen, Provencher
Date Level II Entered: 11/30/1999
Level II Data Entry Recorder: Koch, Luellen, Provencher
Level II Site Visit: Yes
Date of Concurrence: 11/4/1999

Explanatory Narrative:

Inventory work includes Level II inventory for the Keys Ranch historic district which is composed of three National Register properties: the Desert Queen Ranch, Cow Camp and the Barker Dam.

Due to the complexity and nature of the cultural landscape features and objects found at the Desert Queen Ranch, a Cultural Landscape Report should be considered to fully document the site and provide management and treatment recommendations for the site.

Recommendations are included for amending the National Register nomination. The information in this inventory can be used as documentation of these contributing historic landscapes in a future National Register nomination for a ranching and agricultural district.

Joshua Tree National Park has agreed to the inventory content as of November 4, 1999, and the data was transferred to the Washington office on October 30, 2000.

This inventory has been produced by the Pacific Great Basin Support Office in San Francisco by Kimball Koch (CLI coordinator), Mark Luellen (CLI historian), and Shaun Provencher (CLI technician).

Revisions:

Revision Date:	8/26/2004
Recorder:	Shaun Provencher

Explanatory Narrative:

The original version of this document outlined a boundary that followed historic property ownership extents for Bill Keys. Following review by the California SHPO, the boundary of the Keys Ranch Historic District CLI was redrawn to reflect the original discontinuous National Register boundaries for the following sites: Keys Ranch, Cow Camp, and the Barker Dam. The original boundary description can be found in the supplemental information of this inventory.

Landscape Description

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The Keys Ranch historic district is located approximately twenty miles from the park headquarters and visitor center in the town of Twentynine Palms, or approximately ten linear miles cross-country. The landscape is comprised of two discontinuous sections and contains approximately 1,038 acres. The ranch is found on the west and southwest edges of an approximately 4.5 square mile cluster of large granite outcroppings and boulders called the Wonderland of Rocks. Small canyons along the southeastern face of this cluster create sheltered seasonal washes suited to ranching and homesteading in the Mojave desert environment.

SIGNIFICANCE

The Keys Ranch historic district contains three National Register Properties: the Desert Queen Ranch, Cow Camp, and the Barker Dam. The period of significance is from 1894 until Keys' death in 1969. The district is of local significance (Criteria A and B) for its association with the William F. Keys family and their influence in agriculture and industry (mining) in the Twentynine Palms region of the Mojave desert.

LANDSCAPE CONDITION

The Keys Ranch Historic District contains a wide variety of features including a ranch house, ore milling facilities, ranching compounds, agricultural areas and five dams. Most of the structures built before William F. Keys occupied the ranch were subsequently removed or lost. Several historic landscape and structural features have been lost since Keys' death in 1969 at which time the National Park Service took over management of the ranch. The most recent large-scale loss was that of the adobe barn lost shortly after Keys' death.

Cow Camp is of local significance for its contribution to the "Cattleman's Empire" sub-theme and for its association with William F. Keys and his agricultural and ranching influence in the Mojave desert. Located in a small canyon south of the Desert Queen Ranch, the area was first used in 1879 by the "McHaney Gang" to water cattle and provide a place to live. The canyon created a sheltered area for cattle to water and graze. Today the area contains the dam, a house ruin (chimney stack), watering trough, well, retaining wall and barbed wire fence (collapsed). Keys used the area primarily as a grazing area with limited agricultural use.

The Barker Dam is within a large canyon containing a water source that was easily dammed. Although other water impoundments existed, the first Barker Dam was built around 1902 replacing the Meyers Dam located further upstream. The dam still impounds water and is a hiking destination for visitors to the park.

Other elements in the area include a livestock watering tank and feed trough below the dam. A cattle round-up area occurred south of the dam and may have been the location of one of Bill McHaney's cabins which no longer exists. This area was used by Keys for grazing, branding and cattle round-up. The Barker Dam also contains over twenty prehistoric sites which may have occurred here because of the availability of water.

Keys Ranch historic district retains integrity although certain features have been compromised and many are in poor condition. The feeling and associations of the Keys Ranch historic district remains intact due to the relatively recent and continuous (1917-1969) occupation by William Keys and his family and the subsequent park protection of the homestead and associated landscape features. The specific locations of most extant features in the Desert Queen Ranch landscape have not been altered since the end of the

period of significance. The surrounding lands, which were used for the grazing of cattle and horses, retain their open character. Structural materials have remained largely intact despite the loss of the original land uses and the need to reinforce and repair various buildings. The dams at the Desert Queen Ranch, Cow Camp and the Barker Dam all remain intact although recent engineering reports indicate that reinforcement may be needed.

The integrity of certain ranch features have been compromised through:

- the loss of most of the ranch orchard and associated gardens,
- the relocation of some machinery and objects around the ranch following Keys' death
- the installation of a caretaker's residence, a restroom and a parking lot within the ranch complex,
- the creation of a parking lot in the round-up area at the Barker Dam.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES

The Keys Ranch historic district, a rural vernacular landscape, retains integrity in the following landscape characteristics: natural systems and features, spatial organization, cluster arrangement, topography, vegetation, circulation, buildings and structures, cultural traditions, views and vistas and small scale features. The integrity of land use is the most severely compromised of the landscape characteristics.

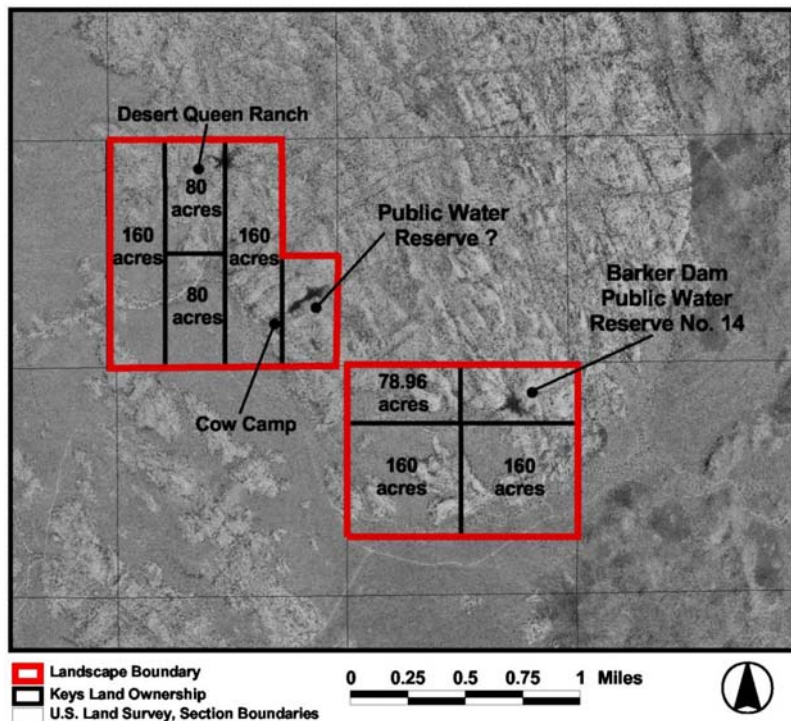
The associated features still convey the physical character of the ranch as it appeared during the Keys' occupation. The ranch remains a vivid example of the ingenuity, work ethic and vision necessary to survive in the Mojave desert. The ranch's location in the desert, and its setting amongst the box canyons on the southwestern edge of the "Wonderland of Rocks", remains the same as when the Keys ranched the area. Materials, design, and workmanship retain their original vernacular qualities and are quite evident, represented by the carpentry, stonework, masonry, and metalwork of the buildings and structures throughout the ranch. The association of the ranch with Keys and his family is still apparent and realized through many of the physical attributes and personal items at the ranch. However, without Keys' active management of the land as a ranch, the land use has changed and no longer serves its original function. The loss of the ranching, agriculture, ore processing, and everyday domestic activities has diminished the feeling of the area as a working ranch.

Cultural Landscapes Inventory Hierarchy Description

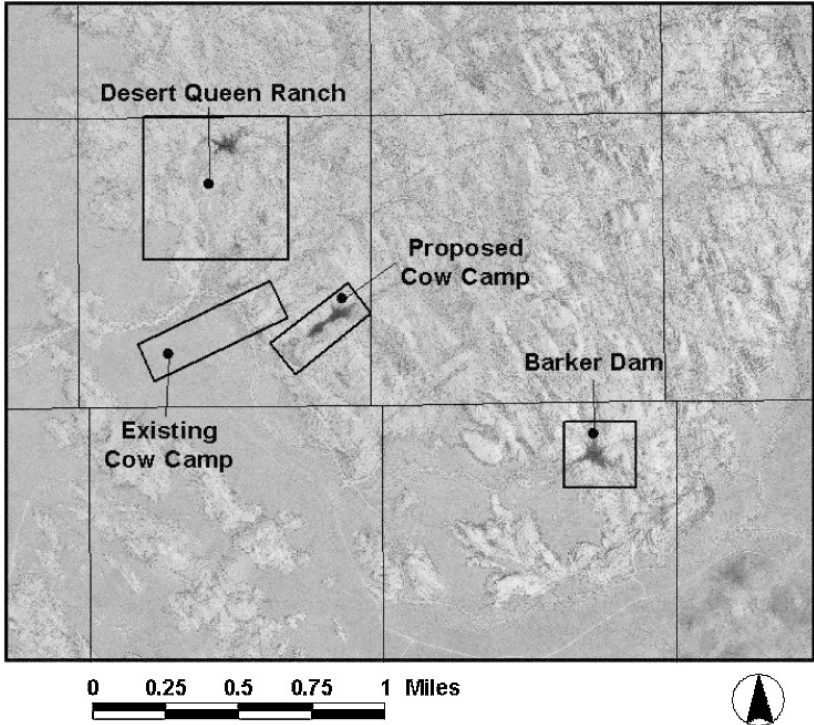
The Keys Ranch historic district landscape is composed of the lands owned, controlled or used by William F. Keys for purposes of ranching, farming, and ore processing. The three major areas of the district- the Desert Queen Ranch, Cow Camp, and Barker Dam are all included under one landscape without any components. While each element retains individual landscape characteristics in varying degrees, all three collectively represent the ranch systems and land ownership patterns associated with the Keys family during the period of significance. By combining all three elements, a more inclusive and systematic view of the landscape is achieved.

Contained within this inventory's boundary are two National Register districts and one National Register structure. The districts include the Desert Queen Ranch (National Register (NR) #75000174, 10/30/75) and Cow Camp (NR #75000228, 10/29/75). The structure is the Barker Dam (NR #75000173, 10/29/75). The boundaries established by the National Register nominations are not consistent with historic land use or ownership patterns (township/range/sections).

To provide a consistent and defensible boundary for the Keys Ranch historic district, historic legal boundaries are used. The National Register boundaries for the individual nominations are not used as the boundaries for the district because they do not correspond to the historic land use or ownership patterns. Holdings were typically divided into 80 or 160-acre subdivisions of a section (640 acres), forming the grid pattern typical throughout the park. The boundaries established in this inventory contain the lands owned by Keys (878.96 acres). Within that boundary are the National Register properties and the federal lands which both surround and include the Cow Camp and Barker Dam National Register properties (158.96 acres). Also included within the landscape is the Keys family cemetery, although it is owned and managed by the Keys family. All of these were important elements in defining and understanding the Keys Ranch historic district as a ranching complex.



Hierarchy #1 Landscape boundary with property and acreage of William F. Keys land holdings (PGSO, CLI, ArcView file, 1999. Source: Digital Ortho Quad from JOTR GIS staff)



Heirarchy #2 Existing and proposed revision to National Register boundaries. (PGSO, CLI, ArcView file, 1999.
Source: Digital Ortho Quad from JOTR GIS staff)

Location Map



Location: Joshua Tree National Park with the Keys Ranch historic district locale highlighted. (PGSO, USGS digital map)

Boundary Description

The boundary of the Keys Ranch cultural landscape is based on three discontinuous parcels established in three separate National Register nominations from 1975: Keys Ranch Historic District, Barker Dam Historic Structure, and Cow Camp Historic District.

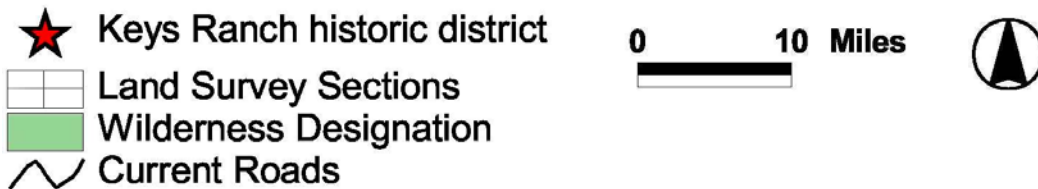
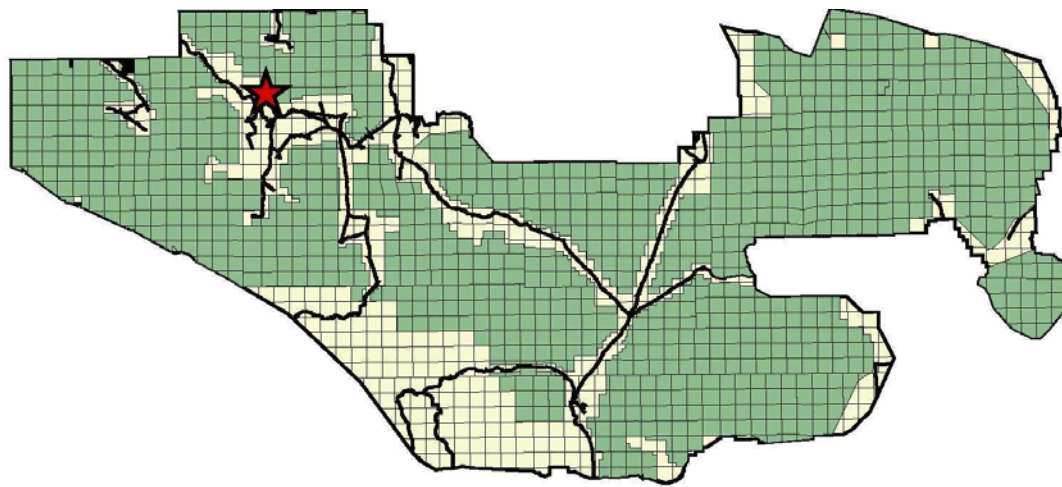
The CLI boundary matches those established in the Keys Ranch Historic District and Barker Dam historic structure nominations as they encompass the majority of built structures associated with the historic period. However, both the UTMs and associated boundary in the 1975 NR nomination for the Cow Camp Historic District have been revised since they miss all resources physically described in the nomination.

The proposed Keys Ranch Historic District boundary takes in all three discontinuous units which are now connected by the historic paved and dirt road corridors that established circulation patterns between the locations during the period of significance.

Regional Context

Political Context

Within the Joshua Tree National Park, the Keys Ranch historic district is located near the park's west entrance in Hidden Valley. The ranch is immediately west of the northernmost area designated as wilderness within the park. The district straddles two townships: the Desert Queen Ranch and Cow Camp are in Township 1, Section 32 within San Bernardino County, and the Barker Dam is to the south in Township 2, Section 4 within Riverside County.



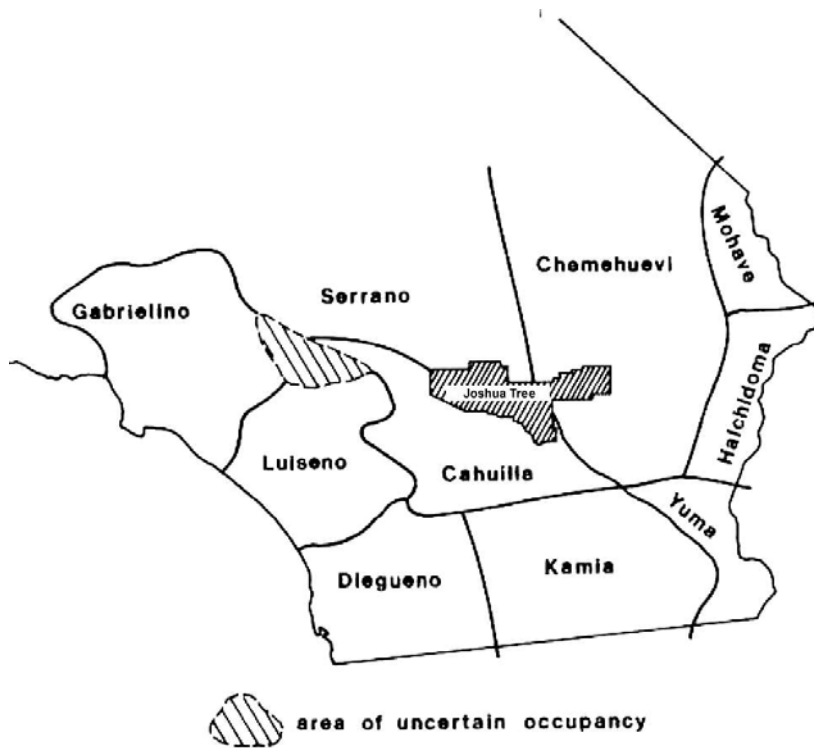
Political Context: Political delineations within Joshua Tree National Park. (PGSO, CLI, ArcView file, 1999. Source: ESRI and JOTR GIS files)

Cultural Context

Keys Ranch historic district is located in Joshua Tree National Park, where it has existed since the establishment of the monument in 1933.

The area within the Keys Ranch Historic District has not been directly attributed to any specific tribe although there is evidence of late prehistoric occupation.

The historic cultural context includes Spanish explorer activity in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries followed by US Army survey teams in the mid-nineteenth century. Significant Anglo-American activity followed the 1849 Gold Rush including mining and ranching activities which became the driving force behind settlement in the Mojave desert, and eventually the establishment of the Desert Queen Ranch.



Cultural Context: Prehistoric tribal "boundaries" around Joshua Tree National Park. (King, 1975 page 22 after Bean, 1972)

Physiographic Context

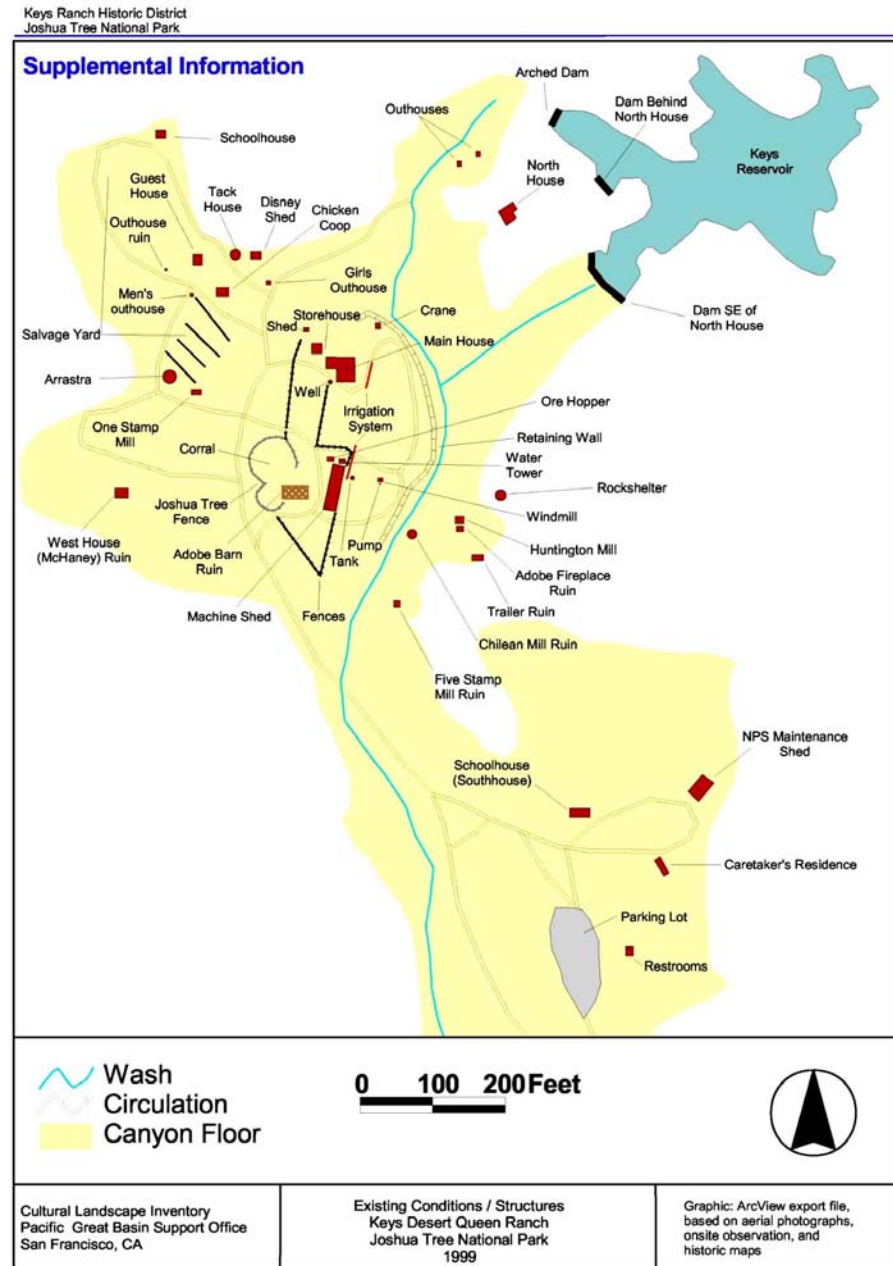
The Keys Ranch historic district is located at approximately 4200 feet in elevation along the west and southwest edge of an approximately 4.5 square mile cluster of large granite outcroppings and boulders called the Wonderland of Rocks. Small canyons along the southeastern face of this cluster create sheltered seasonal washes suited to ranching and homesteading in the Mojave desert environment. During heavy rains, the washes along each canyon, which include the Desert Queen Ranch, Cow Camp and the Barker Dam, converge and flow west out of Hidden Valley into Quail Wash and exit the park near the west entrance.



Physiographic Context: Panoramic photograph of canyon containing the Desert Queen Ranch homestead, looking west. (PGSO, CLI negative #JOTR-N-0001, 1999)

Site Plan

Site Plan #1: Desert Queen Ranch site plan. See Supplemental Information at the end of this document for full-scale image. (PGSO, CLI, ArcView file, 1999)



Chronology

Year	Event	Description
1879 AD	Built	Cabins, troughs and tanks (water impoundments) were built, and a rock-lined well was dug by members of the cattle-rustling “McHaney Gang” at what is now known as Cow Camp.
1879 AD	Settled	William and James McHaney settled and started running cattle in the area that is now Desert Queen Ranch.
1880 - 1890 AD	Built	George Meyer, a member of the cattle-rustling gang, built a dam near the location of the present Barker Dam.
1894 AD	Built	A five stamp mill was constructed at the ranch to process the Desert Queen Mine ore.
1894 AD	Built	The McHaney brothers began developing mining operations at the Desert Queen Mine.
1902 AD	Built	Local cattleman, C.O. Barker, constructed a dam to impound rainwater runoff at the present site of the Barker Dam.
1910 AD	Settled	William Keys began living at the ranch while supervising the Desert Queen Mill located on the ranch.
1913 AD	Built	Keys built a small wood frame home (either from scratch or by using an existing structure) with a stone chimney. Keys would later marry and set up housekeeping with Frances Mae Lawton in 1918.
1914 AD	Built	Keys created a reservoir north of the house by erecting a system of earthen dams across natural washes and ravines. Keys also developed several springs, watering holes and wells.
1914 AD	Land Transfer	The north half of the NE quarter of Section 4, including Barker Dam, was withdrawn as Public Reserve No. 14.

1914 AD	Planted	Keys began planting an orchard adjacent to the house with a variety of fruit trees.
1917 AD	Land Transfer	The McHaneys vacated ownership of the Desert Queen Ranch and Keys was issued a patent for eighty-acres in Section 32, T1S, R8E, for homesteading. Bill McHaney continued to live at the ranch until his death in 1937.
1917 AD	Mined	Keys acquired the Desert Queen Mine after the death of the owner, William Morgan. Keys subsequently erected a small stamp mill and Chilean mill on the ranch.
1918 AD	Ranched	Keys filed a stock raising homestead which included the Cow Camp area and started raising cattle. The homestead now totaled 160 acres.
1919 AD	Ranched	Keys was issued a patent for 80 acres of Section 32 T1S, R8E. The patent was for homesteading. Keys' land holdings now totaling 160 acres.
1920 AD	Planted	Records indicate that the garden was being planted with corn, tomatoes, beans, squash, turnips, beets, carrots, cucumbers, melons, peanuts, kale, dill, and asparagus for the family's consumption but excess crops were shared with visitors and neighbors.
1920 - 1930 AD	Built	Keys built fences around some of his land and watering holes.
1926 AD	Land Transfer	Keys was issued two patents for 160 acres each in Section 32 T1S, R8E, for stock-raising and homesteading. These 160-acre parcels were located on either side of the ranch, one of which contained Cow Camp. The ranch now totaled 480 acres.
1930 AD	Mined	Keys acquired the nearby two-stamp mill and Wall Street Mine while continuing to operate the Desert Queen Mine.
1930 - 1940 AD	Built	Keys built guest cabins to house relatives, acquaintances, and tourists.

1930 - 1942 AD	Established	Keys hired a schoolteacher. Two cabins were utilized as schoolrooms at the ranch. The first students included Keys' son, Willis, and daughter, Virginia.
1930 - 1943 AD	Built	Keys raised and reinforced the dams at the Desert Queen Ranch and Barker Dam with concrete to increase the storage of water from seepage and rainfall.
1932 AD	Land Transfer	Keys located the Big Chief Millsite claim that included Barker Dam.
1936 AD	Established	Joshua Tree National Monument was established.
1937 AD	Land Transfer	Keys was issued a patent for Lots 3 and 4, Sec 4, T2S, R8E. The 78.96 acres included the Big Chief Millsite claim and Barker Dam. Keys land holdings now totaled 558.96 acres.
1938 AD	Land Transfer	Frances Keys was issued a patent for 160 acres of Section 4, T2S, R8E. After the death of Bill McHaney in 1937, Keys was issued the patent for 160 acres in Section 4, T2S, R8E. The ranch reached its maximum size of 878.96 acres.
1940 - 1950 AD	Developed	A substantial junkyard resulted as Keys routinely brought in equipment and building supplies from abandoned mining and homestead sites.
1943 - 1948 AD	Abandoned	Keys was sent to San Quentin Prison for killing Worth Bagley, a neighbor, during a gunfight. One account indicates that Keys' permit to graze cattle was revoked by the NPS because of the incident.
1944 - 1963 AD	Developed	By this time Keys had acquired over 800 acres in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties
1948 - 1960 AD	Built	After his release from prison, Keys built two more dams structures to augment the first one, increased his orchard and garden areas, and raised the height of the walls of the Barker and Cow Camp Dams.

1961 AD	Built	Disney Studios built a shed in the area to film "Chico the Misunderstood Coyote". Keys later (no date) moved the shed to the Desert Queen Ranch. At this time, Disney studios "improved" the petroglyph in the cave near the Barker Dam.
1963 AD	Abandoned	Keys dismantled the Chilean mill at the ranch.
1963 AD	Established	The ranch became a favorite camping and picnic spot for the Boy Scouts and other youth groups.
1963 AD	Memorialized	Frances Keys died and was buried at the family cemetery on the ranch alongside the three children who had preceded her. (One report claims that she was originally buried in Twentynine Palms and was later interred at the ranch, date not certain).
1964 AD	Purchased/Sold	Keys sold the ranch to Henry Tubman of Los Angeles for \$131,000 but maintained tenancy rights.
1966 AD	Land Transfer	Henry Tubman traded the ranch to the government for land elsewhere. Bill Keys maintained a life tenancy agreement with Joshua Tree National Monument.
1969 AD	Abandoned	After Bill Keys' death, the ranch, gardens and orchard were abandoned.
1969 AD	Memorialized	William F. Keys is buried alongside his wife and three of their children.
1969 - 1999 AD	Developed	Visitors to the Barker Dam area begin parking in what was the Keys' cattle round-up area.
1972 AD	Maintained	The first major effort was begun by the National Park Service to inventory and assess the objects and structures at the ranch. Management alternatives for site development were also evaluated.
1973 - 1974 AD	Built	Maintenance shed constructed with materials from the Lucky Boy Mine.
1973 - 1974 AD	Built	Visitor parking area constructed.

1974 AD	Land Transfer	Keys Ranch was conveyed to the National Park Service. First volunteer caretakers camp at ranch in exchange for providing security to the site.
1976 AD	Developed	The first public tours are conducted as part of the National Park Service Bicentennial Interpretation Program.
1989 - 1990 AD	Built	Loop road around the visitor parking area constructed.
1998 AD	Built	New restroom facilities were constructed near the visitor parking lot at the Desert Queen Ranch.
1999 AD	Developed	National Park Service implemented regularly scheduled guided walking tours of the Desert Queen Ranch.
1999 AD	Stabilized	Stabilization work done on the South School House, Guest House, Main House, Corrugated Metal Shed, School House, and Barker Dam Wooden Watering Trough. See "Keys Ranch Structural Stabilization, FY 99" report (Kuffer, MaGee, Keswick, 1999)

Statement Of Significance

The Keys Ranch historic district is locally significant for its associations with ranching and industry (mining operations) in the Mojave desert (Criterion A), and for its associations with prospector and rancher William F. Keys, (Criterion B). The district consists of three primary areas within Joshua Tree National Park, they include the Desert Queen Ranch, Cow Camp and Barker Dam. The period of significance is from 1910 to, the years from when Keys began living at the ranch to the year he constructed the last major infrastructure improvements. Most of the existing landscape characteristics and features also date from this time.

The ranch is significant because it is an outstanding example of an uncommon twentieth-century desert homestead and ranch (Criterion A). William and James McHaney established the ranch in the 1870s and in later years William F. Keys owned and developed it further. The McHaney's first settled the area in around 1879 while rustling cattle. Keys began living at the Desert Queen Ranch in 1910 and homesteaded the property in 1918. The ranch district represents one individual's ability along with his family to adapt and succeed in settling a hostile environment. The wide variety of features that remain within the ranch include the ranch house, ore milling facilities, ranching compounds, agricultural areas and several dams. The outcome of this development was a ranch that provided a home as well as facilitated the mining and agricultural operations of Keys and his family.

Keys' occupation of the Desert Queen Ranch and his utilization of Cow Camp and Barker Dam established one of the most successful desert settlements in the region. He raised cattle, horses, burros, and goats; cultivated a fruit orchard, garden, grain crops; had numerous mining ventures, provided supplies and services for numerous other miners; established a local school, and raised a family. All of this was aided by the construction and augmentation of a number of masonry and concrete dams to impound and control critical water supplies, thus providing a reliable water supply essential for life in the Mojave Desert. The ranch's appearance is utilitarian in nature with its various use areas built in close proximity to one another. Indigenous rock, lumber, and native plants were the basic materials used at the ranch, Cow Camp and Barker Dam.

The Keys Ranch historic district is significant because of its association with William F. Keys, (Criteria B), an infamous prospector and rancher who made significant contributions to the settlement of the Mojave Desert. Keys arrived in the area while the land was wide open and the native grasses were high, when neighbors were few and far between, and when a high degree of self-reliance was absolutely essential for survival. No towns of any size existed near the Keys homestead. Because of the great distance to neighboring towns that were accessed by primitive roads, the Keys family had to provide much of their own food and other necessities. The remote location of the ranch prompted Keys to build a guesthouse for relatives, acquaintances, and tourists who dropped by. Keys and his family adapted well to the desert and thrived. In addition to his large ranch, Keys built several roads. The entire Keys Ranch historic district is an example of how Keys modified the harsh desert environment to provide the necessities of life.

Keys was the only settler in the area now known as Joshua Tree National Park, who gained a comfortable long-term livelihood from his livestock, homesteading, and mining ventures. Keys and his family were able to sustain a livelihood due to their ambition, independence, self-reliance, and hard work. Keys was able to work with the desert by realizing its potential for adversity, yet appreciating its natural beauty and assets.

The Keys Ranch historic district retains a high degree of each of the seven aspects or qualities that, in

various combinations, define integrity according to National Register Standards—location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Contributive landscape characteristics include spatial organization, vegetation, circulation, buildings and structures, cluster arrangement, and small scale features. The remaining features of the Keys Ranch historic district convey its rich associations with William F. Keys and his agricultural and industrial influences on the local history of the Mojave Desert.

Physical History

1879-1910

The first known settlers of the area now referred to as the Desert Queen Ranch area were two brothers, William (Bill) and James McHaney. They started running cattle in the area as early as 1879. The site served as pasturage and resting location on the trail from Arizona and New Mexico to markets on the California coast. During the time the McHaney family occupied the property, it was known variously as Pinone Ranch, the Old McHaney Cow Ranch, the Desert Queen, and the Queen. The exact size and location of the property they occupied is not certain. The McHaney family probably never legally filed on the land, but utilized it for the period of time they ran cattle and operated the nearby Desert Queen Mine.

By the mid-1880s, other areas of the present day Joshua Tree National Park were utilized by a group of rustlers known as the “McHaney Gang.” Aside from the McHaney brothers, the gang included Charlie Martin, Willie and Charlie Button, Diamond George, Ike Chestnut, and Bill Meyers. The extent of Bill McHaney’s participation in their illegal activities is unclear but his brother James was the leader of this local cattle rustling ring. Cow Camp, located one-half mile south of present day Desert Queen Ranch, (Section 32, T1S, R8E), was active as the outlaw headquarters during the late 1880s and early 1890s. Bill McHaney sold his interest in the cattle operations to George Meyers in 1894. In the same year, the McHaney family developed mining operations at the Desert Queen Mine. Around the same time, a five-stamp mill was built at the present site of the Desert Queen Ranch to process the mine ore. It was financed by Barker Iron Works of Los Angeles. Two adobe cabins, a cookhouse, bunkhouse and a barn were also constructed. Wells were dug to provide water for the domestic and mining operations.

Water impoundment in the area of the present-day Barker Dam began during the livestock grazing days of the monument and served many cattlemen over the years. The purpose of the dams was to increase the size of an already existing pool or natural tank of water and to make it a permanent water hole that would support large herds of cattle. Over time a number of dams have been constructed in the area. One of the first, the Meyers Dam, was built in the 1880s-1890’s by cattle rustler George Meyers and can only be seen when the water level is down. It is a low earth and stone wall located upstream from the existing concrete dam. What is referred to as the original Barker Dam was built downstream of the Meyers Dam by Barker and Shay in 1902. These early dams leaked from the start and could not hold water very long.

Stock Raising Homestead 160 Acres 1926	Homestead 80 Acres 1917	Stock Raising Homestead 160 Acres 1926	Joshua Tree National Monument 1936
	Homestead 80 Acres 1919		

Stock Raising 78.96 1937	Public Reserve No. 14 1914
Lawton to Keys Homestead 160 Acres 1938	McHaneY to Keys Homestead 160 Acres 1938

History #1: Keys property acquisitions. (PGSO, CLI, 1999)



History #2: Rugged boulder landscape surrounding the McHaneY cabin near Barker Dam, looking east(?). (Joshua Tree National Park archives, accession 351-12510, n.d.)

1910-1969

William F. Keys, was born in 1879 as George Barth. It is unclear where he was born, it is reported to have been in either Russia or Palisades, Nebraska. After having lived in many different places in the country, he arrived in Mojave desert in 1910. Keys, a prospect miner, may have started living at the site of the Desert Queen Ranch when he began working at the Desert Queen Mine. Beginning in about 1913, Keys started to construct the simple wood-frame shacks that would subsequently make up the Desert Queen Ranch homestead. In 1914, Keys created a reservoir north of the house by erecting the early stages an elaborate system of dams in natural washes and ravines. He also developed several springs and water holes and dug additional wells. The water collected in the reservoir was channeled through pipes to the nearby garden and orchard.

The McHaneys vacated ownership of the ranch in 1917 and Keys filed for an eighty-acre homestead that included the mill site. Keys worked at the Desert Queen Mine as a watchman and did assessment work until the owner, William Morgan died. The mine was offered to Keys in payment for his back wages. In 1917, Bill Keys became the owner of the Desert Queen Mine and subsequently erected a small stamp mill and Chilean mill at the ranch. There he processed the ore from the Desert Queen Mine as well as ore brought in by other prospectors. This era after World War I, along with the Great Depression, brought an increase in homesteading and a renewed interest in mining. This meant a dramatic increase in population, especially in the Twentynine Palms area by those wanting to take advantage of the increase in gold prices. Keys' ranch became a milling center, in addition to providing goods and services to the new miners and their families.

In 1918, though ranching was not his primary interest, Keys did have approximately 100 head of cattle in the Cow Camp area. He most likely utilized the Cow Camp when he filed on the Desert Queen Ranch in 1919 and used it for stock-raising purposes. Cow Camp was the former headquarters of ranchers Barker and Shay. They established a little camp there which included cabins, a blacksmith shop, and several corrals. They also had a well and a rock tank to catch water. Keys, later built the Cow Camp dam to increase the amount of water available for his stock in later years. The remains of a barbed wire fence indicate that the valley was fenced off to serve as a corral. The cattle would have been feed and watered in this natural U-shape enclosed area. Historic photos indicate that Keys raised rye at Cow Camp, it was most likely used as cattle feed. By 1926, Keys had acquired 320 acres for stock raising which contained Cow Camp.

According to Bill's son Willis, conflict developed between Barker and Shay soon after Keys acquired Cow Camp. At that time the ranchers were still using the area and were not willing to leave. Keys homesteaded the land, fenced in the area, and cut off access to the water. In retaliation, Barker and Shay had the buildings dismantled and removed, leaving only the stone chimney. By law Keys was entitled to all of the improvement on the property. Thus he filed suit with the county, he won the case and was awarded a cash settlement.

Bill Keys married Frances Mae Lawton in 1918. The couple had seven children, three of whom died in childhood and are buried in the family cemetery on the ranch. In 1930, to educate his children, Keys built a school and a school teacher's house on the ranch. The county Board of Supervisors declared it an "emergency school" and funded at least part of the cost of the teacher and supplies. The school operated until 1942.

Food production was a primary concern. Keys planted a large garden in the early 1920's. The fruits and vegetables from the garden and orchard were canned and provided the family with food throughout the winter.

When Keys originally acquired the land, there was very little fencing in and around the ranch. In the early 1930's, Keys built a circular corral out of willow poles and cable, adjoining the back of the barn. He also constructed fences around some of his land and watering holes. This resulted in problems with other cattlemen and later with the federal government.

Mining became the dominant activity at the Desert Queen Ranch at the same time Keys had success with cattle ranching. Keys became an important local figure and the ranch an important node for associations among the mines in the area. The Desert Queen Ranch was near the site of the Desert Queen Mine and during the 1920's the hub of Keys' interest in mining and prospecting.

President Roosevelt signed a proclamation establishing Joshua Tree National Monument on August 10, 1936. Approximately 825,340 acres of desert were officially set aside as a desert reserve. No administration was established on site until September 1940, when the headquarters were placed at Twentynine Palms. The Joshua Tree National Monument land withdrawal was situated in California in both San Bernardino and Riverside Counties. Its approximate boundaries were the San Bernardino baseline on the north, the right-of-way of the Metropolitan Water District Canal on the south, Morongo Creek on the west, and the Coxcomb Mountains on the east.

With the establishment of the Monument, the Desert Queen Ranch and all of Bill Keys landholdings were now within its boundary. Keys' relationship with National Park Service personnel was volatile in the early years of Joshua Tree National Monument. He found himself in violation of federal laws when timbering his mine shafts with native trees. He believed his cattle should be able to roam at will over Lost Horse and Queen valleys, grazing from one water hole to another as weather and forage conditions changed. By 1943, Keys had acquired over 800 acres in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties. Due to largely reduced grazing rights in the monument, Keys was the last landholder to own cattle.

In 1937, Keys was issued a patent for 78.96 acres which include the Big Chief Millsite claim and Barker Dam. This sizable reservoir in Section 4, T2S, R8E, was created during the livestock grazing days of the park and served many cattlemen over the years. The first known dam in this area is attributed to George Meyers (1880's-1890's). Subsequently, a larger dam was built downstream of the Meyers Dam in 1902, reportedly by C.O. Barker. Barker had bought the business from George Meyers and continued cattle ranging into the late 1920's. Barker's herd was later merged with that of Mr. Shay who ran cattle in the park until about 1940. In 1914, the north half of the northeast quarter of Section 4, including Barker Dam, was withdrawn as Public Reserve No. 14. Keys' claim to the area was later declared null and void because the land was part of the public water reserve. Barker Dam became a source of conflict between Bill Keys, a homesteader, and cattlemen in the area. After Keys and his wife obtained homestead titles to land surrounding the dam on all but the inaccessible north side, Keys fenced the land and threatened to deny the public access to it. This threat of closure caused considerable friction between Keys and the Stocker-Shay cattle interests.

Over the years Keys had made various improvements to the dam. Reportedly in 1932, he went inside dam, dug down to bedrock, and started a new one. He poured a wider concrete base about two feet at the bottom abutting the old dam. The height of the dam was raised in 1949 and in 1950 it was increased to its present height. The lower nine-foot portion of the present structure that was constructed in the early part of the century is cement faced native stone. The dam is inscribed "Bighorn Dam", built by Willis Keys & Wm F. Keys- Phyllis Ann Keys- F.M. Keys, 1949-50.

Bill McHaney lived in a narrow canyon south of the Barker Dam though his cabin is now gone. This site was later used as a corral and branding area by Keys. West of Barker Dam, two drinking troughs were

built on the flat wash below Barker Dam, one a wooden wagon box and one of cement. The latter, a double-ring watering trough was built by Keys in 1939. The original watering situation on the site consisted of a small concrete trough below the dam that caught and impounded leakage. After establishment of the national monument in 1936, Keys felt he had a legitimate right to sole use of the water in Barker Dam because of the improvements he had made there and because he had been using it for so long. Many of the cattle issues resolved themselves in the 1940's as the effects of overgrazing and a decline in rainfall mitigated against successful cattle ranching.

In 1943, Keys was convicted of manslaughter for the killing of Worth Bagley and sent to San Quentin Prison. Keys was paroled in 1948 and pardoned in 1956. He spent most of World War II in prison, during which time the mining industry collapsed. Cattle ranching in the monument also declined because of overgrazing and a drop in rainfall. It may have ended earlier for Keys. According to Keys' son Willis, in May of 1943 the National Park Service cancelled Keys' grazing permit, putting an end to the conflict over cattle grazing at the Barker Dam area.

Keys appeared to have changed his approach to dealing with government officials during his years at San Quentin and in later years became much friendlier with monument personnel. Upon his return to the ranch in 1948, his interests were in developing a tourist-oriented business focused on the nearby towns of Joshua Tree and Yucca Valley. At this time Keys resumed his now famous activities of collecting abandoned materials from various mine sites and storing them at the ranch. Keys continued to improve his property by building dams and working in the mines.

Keys' wife, Frances, died in 1963 and was buried in the family cemetery. In 1964, Keys sold the ranch to Henry Tubman of Los Angeles for \$131,000, who eventually traded it in 1966 to the U.S. Government for land elsewhere. Part of the land transfer included a life tenancy agreement with the National Park Service.

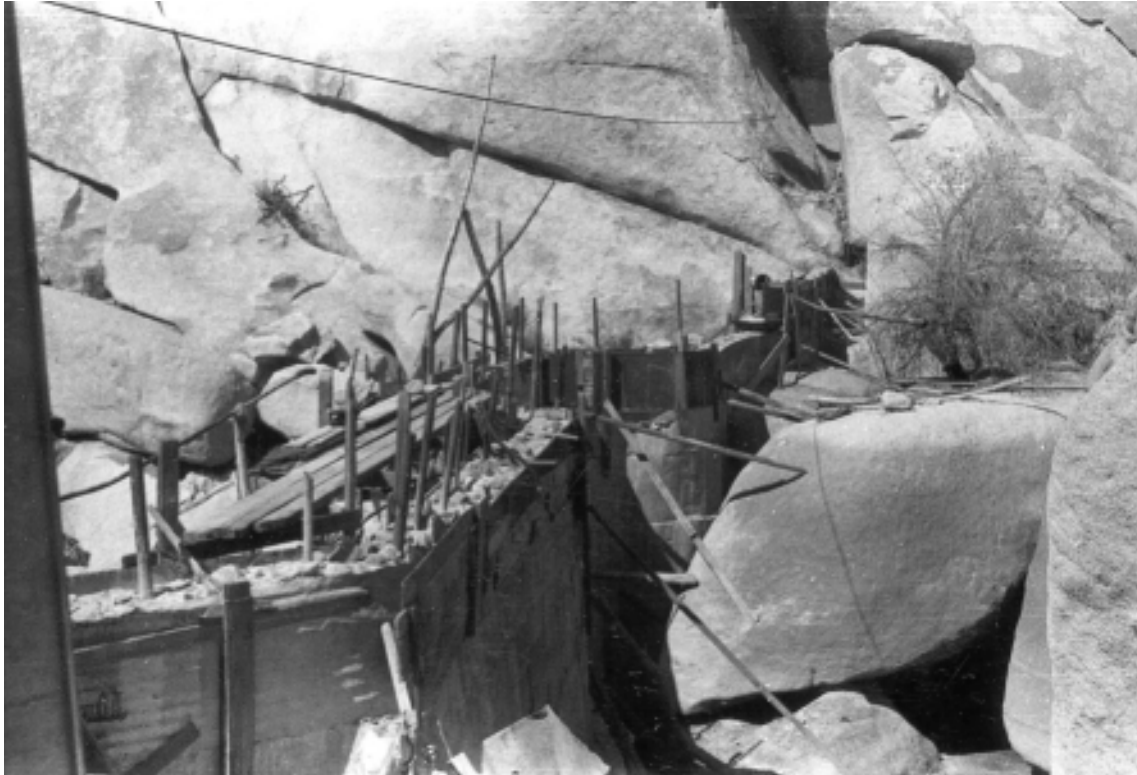
Keys died in 1969 and was buried beside his wife and three of his children in the family cemetery at the Desert Queen Ranch.



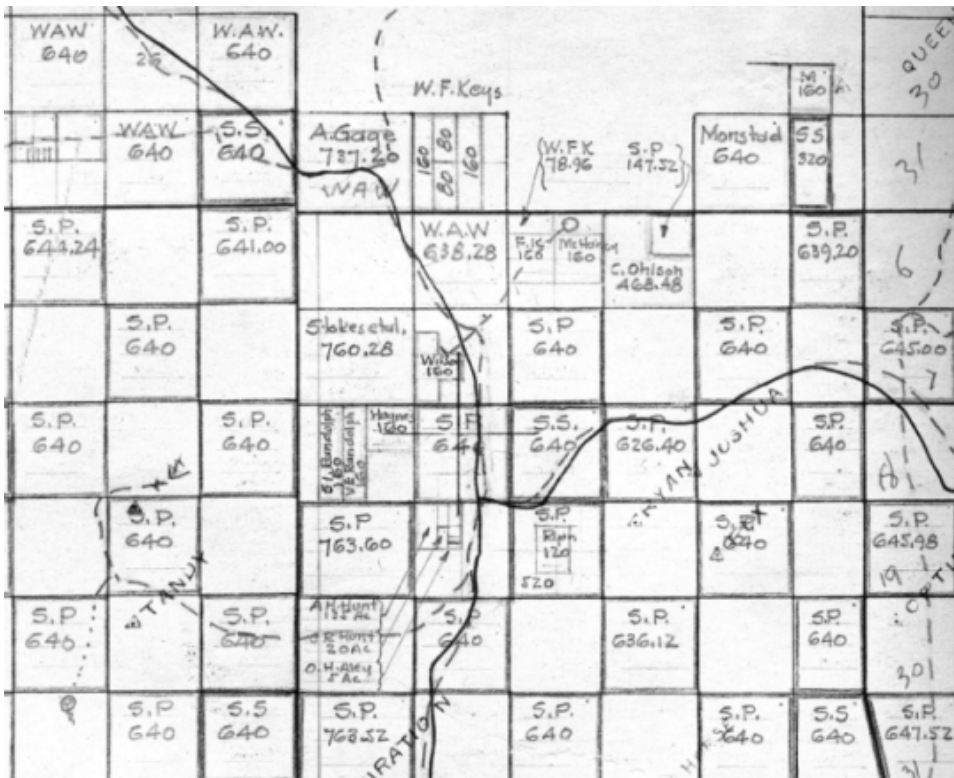
History #3 Pupils at Desert Queen Ranch South School House. Top: Marian Heddington and Pat Hayes, looking east. Bottom: Don McRoberts and Phyllis Keys (Joshua Tree National Park archives, accession #531-I2215,n.d.)



History #4: Construction of primary Keys Ranch Dam, looking east. (Joshua Tree National Park archives, accession #531-I2242, Ross Holland, 1971)



History #5: A narrow gap in a wash became the location for the Barker Dam, looking east. (Joshua Tree National Park archives, accession #531-166, 1950)



History #6: Land division patterns in the vicinity of Keys Ranch historic district. Note Keys property top center. (Joshua Tree National Park archives, large format map collection, revised Aug, 1946)

1964-present

After Keys' death, the ranch, which had been in a declining state of repair, was not actively maintained as a cultural resource by the park service for several years. The first major effort to inventory the buildings and objects at the ranch took place in 1972. In 1974, volunteer caretakers camped on the property to provide site security. This practice continues today depending on the availability of volunteers. In 1976, the first public tours were conducted by the NPS as part of the Bicentennial Interpretation Program. The parking lot may have been constructed at the same time. Historic American Building Survey (HABS) inventory work at the Desert Queen Ranch was done in the summer of 1993. Many of the historic structures were stabilized and during the summer of 1999. A comfort station was also built at the Desert Queen Ranch in conjunction with the new interpretive tours being provided for visitors to the ranch.

The management objective for the Desert Queen Ranch has been to stabilize the significant features of the historic site to reflect the general character of the Keys Ranch at the time of Bill Keys occupation. A management plan for the Desert Queen Ranch is currently being drafted.



History #7: Frances and William Keys in front of artifact table and house, looking east. (Joshua Tree National Park archives, accession #693-101)



History #8: Historic view of Desert Queen Ranch house, looking east. (Joshua Tree National Park archives, accession #693-109, 1913)



History #9: First National Park Service tour of the Desert Queen Ranch, looking north. (Joshua Tree National Park archives, accession #631-12806, Donald M. Black, 1975)

Analysis And Evaluation

Summary

The Keys Ranch historic district, a rural vernacular landscape, retains integrity in the following landscape characteristics: natural systems and features, spatial organization, topography, vegetation, circulation, buildings and structures, cluster arrangement, views and vistas and small scale features. The integrity of land use is the most severely compromised of the landscape characteristics.

The associated features still convey the physical character of the ranch as it appeared during Bill Keys' occupation. The ranch remains a vivid example of the ingenuity, work ethic and vision necessary to survive in the Mojave desert. The ranch's location in the desert, and its setting amongst the box canyons on the southwestern edge of the "Wonderland of Rocks", remains the same as when Keys ranched the area. Materials, design and workmanship retain their original vernacular qualities and are quite evident, represented by the carpentry, stonework, masonry, and metalwork of the buildings and structures throughout the ranch. The association of the ranch with Keys and his family is still apparent and realized through many of the physical attributes and personal items at the ranch. However, without Keys active management of the land as a ranch, the land use has changed and it no longer serves its original function. The loss of the ranching, agriculture, ore processing, and everyday domestic activities has diminished the feeling of the area as a working ranch.

Landscape Characteristics And Features

Archeological Sites

The vicinity of Joshua Tree National Park was prehistorically occupied by the Serrano, Chemehuevi, and Cahuilla tribes whose influence can be found throughout the region and is documented in a number of publications (King 1975, Parker 1980).

The Keys Ranch historic district contains specific evidence of prehistoric occupation. In the fall of 1996 (Warren and Schneider, 1997), summer of 1998 (Univ. of Nevada, draft 1998) and the summer of 1998 (Univ. of Nevada, draft 1998) excavations were conducted at the Huntington Mill, Adobe Barn, G-11-1, Ram on Rocks site, road cut, Rockshelter 1 site, and Rockshelter 2 site. Inventories were done at other associated sites and include samples taken from midden layers along the road cut. These have not been summarized but "indicate a major late prehistoric presence at Keys Ranch... demonstrated by late-period projectile point types and ceramics found at all the prehistoric sites tested." (correspondence with Joan Schneider, Ph.D, University of California, Riverside). Historic material was found at all of the above locations. However, information specific to the Desert Queen Ranch is scant, with the most systematic data coming from one completed and two draft reports of field excavations conducted on the ranch.

Two archeological sites are currently interpreted by park staff. The first is the rock slicks adjacent to the entry road. These slicks are on boulders at the base of the canyon slope and were of interest to visitors and tourists who came to visit Keys and his ranch. It appears that other artifacts such as the grinding stones (manos) were collected and brought to this site by Keys and his family to embellish the history of these rock slicks. These grinding stones are still used as an interpretive tool by park staff but their authenticity to the site can not be verified. However, even if the grinding stones are not directly linked to these sites, they have historic value as objects used by Keys to interest people in the ranch.

The second feature interpreted by park staff are the middens located along the entry road into the ranch which have been exposed as part of a road cut (site #CA-SBR-746). These are of interest not only for

their prehistoric significance, but provide evidence that the area was farmed by Keys. Exposed by the construction of the entry road, the cross section of the midden also shows a sequence of uses. In an initial evaluation of the midden stratigraphy, park staff indicated that initial review by Warren and Shneider indicate four primary layers. The bottom is sterile soil. Above the layer of sterile soil is a midden which in turn is covered by mill tailings. The mill tailings, in turn, are covered by a ploughed zone containing organic matter that would have been typical of the rich organic material Keys would excavate from the bottom of the reservoirs to fertilize his crops. This information will be confirmed when the report by Warren and Schneider is released for review.

Twenty prehistoric sites were recorded in the Barker dam area in a surface reconnaissance survey made by O'Neil in 1968 (King 1975). This survey states that the twenty prehistoric sites were possibly associated with Serrano groups from post 1000 AD to post contact periods. "Ten of these have middens, while others are concentrations of surface material, grinding sticks and/or rock art." The density of these sites increases with proximity to the historic dam and includes 11 petrographic element types and 27 subtypes. One of these images was pecked and painted over by the Disney Studios in the 1960's for "cinematic effect" during a film shoot (site #CA-SBR-311). This information is documented on site maps in the park archives.

No archeological documentation has taken place at Cow Camp.

No recent research has been done to assess the integrity of the archeological sites within the district.



Archeological Sites #1: Midden stratigraphy, Desert Queen Ranch, looking east. (PGSO, CLI slide #JOTR-S-0001-17, 1999)



Archeological Sites #2: Metate, grinding pit, and bedrock mortar, Desert Queen Ranch, looking north. (PGSO, CLI #JOTR-S-0001-19, 1999)



Archeological Sites #3: Petroglyph cave at Barker Dam, looking east. (PGSO, CLI negative #JOTR-N-0007-11, 1999)

Characteristic Feature	Type Of Contribution	LCS Structure Name	IDLCS Number	Structure Number
CA-RIV-209	Contributing			
CA-RIV-26	Contributing			
CA-RIV-902 through 908	Contributing			
CA-RIV-910 through 921	Contributing			
CA-SBR-311	Contributing			
CA-SBR-312	Contributing			
CA-SBR-44 through 745	Contributing			
CA-SBR-7168/H (prehistoric and historic)	Contributing			
CA-SBR-7173	Contributing			
CA-SBR-7177	Contributing			
CA-SBR-7181	Contributing			
CA-SBR-7195H (historic only)	Contributing			
CA-SBR-735	Contributing			
CA-SBR-762	Contributing			

Buildings And Structures

Keys Ranch historic district is a complex of buildings, dams, structures, and parts of machinery and equipment associated with ranching and mining. The Keys family demonstrated the resourcefulness needed to survive in the desert isolation by building water reservoirs, stocking fish, planting vegetable gardens and an orchard, and raising a variety of livestock. The entire Keys Ranch historic district is an example of modifying the harsh desert environment to provide the necessities of life. The variety of buildings and structures present at the ranch reflect a wide range of functions that were performed there.

Sixteen historic buildings and approximately twenty-one historic structures can be found at the Desert Queen Ranch. The List of Classified Structures (LCS) currently contains 39 structures from the ranch. (This total also includes small scale features.) All of the buildings and structures date from the periods of significance (1894-1969). Cow Camp contains two structures that are on the LCS. Barker Dam contains four structures that are listed on the LCS.

The buildings' appearances have remained relatively unchanged since William Keys' death. Except for the adobe barn ruin (HS01N), all of the buildings and structures date from the Keys' occupation of the ranch with the exception of the non-historic features (caretaker's residence, maintenance shed and comfort station) near the visitor staging and parking area. The adobe barn ruin is the only extant remains of the McHaney Brother's cattle operation at the ranch (1894-1916). The barn was built in 1894 along with an adobe cookhouse and an adobe bunkhouse, both of which were demolished around 1920. The barn ruin has severely eroded, to the point where almost nothing remains.

The main house (HS01A) is the nucleus of the ranch and was constructed by Bill Keys around 1913. Placed in a flat area of the valley adjacent to a large boulder outcropping, the structure is believed to have been a wooden shack that was moved in from another location. As the ranch evolved over the years, the buildings were characterized by their vernacular construction, using materials largely salvaged from mine structures in the vicinity although it is possible that Keys might have purchased some of the lumber. The nature of this type of construction is such that most of the ranch buildings were not built to last. In many places the wood sills of the building rest directly on the earth because there was no immediate need to protect them from dry rot in such a dry climate. Almost none of the buildings were ever painted. This has exposed the wood to the deteriorating effects of the desert sun, occasional rain, and windblown sand.

The storehouse (HS01B) north of the house was erected when Keys attempted to promote the ranch as a local tourist attraction and living history museum with pioneer artifacts. Here, the Keys family sold items they had found in the desert to the ranch visitors. The storehouse is distinctive because of its stone water table with natural unfinished wood siding above and stone retaining walls that added a more designed look to the structure.

The Keys' maintained a guest house (HS01I) near the salvage yard which was also used for tourist accommodations. The wood frame building has walls of horizontal unfinished natural wood boards. The building is presently surrounded by several metal bedsteads that Keys salvaged with the intent to sell.

In 1942, Mr. and Mrs. Keys hired a schoolteacher and established a school for his and other local children. The schoolhouse (HS01J) is the northern most building of the ranch. The wooden frame building is covered with vertical siding. Along both sides of the building are hinged screen panels. The south house (HS01T) was also used as a school. The wooden frame structure with an exterior exposed frame, has a gable roof and an added room on the west side. The north house (HS01W) was built for the schoolteacher assigned by the county to teach at the ranch and later used as a residence for visitors. The

building is constructed of wood with a gable roof. Like many other structures at the ranch, it is sided with vertical board and batten of natural unfinished wood. There are two outhouses associated with this house (HS01Y and HS01Z). The school related structures were placed on the outer edge of the homestead area. This was done most likely for reasons of safety and seclusion from the ranching and mining activities.

The west house ruin (HS01M), also known as the McHaney House, is located away from the Keys' living area and has collapsed. It was reportedly used by Bill McHaney in his declining years until his death in 1937.

Various sheds and outhouses were placed throughout the homestead area. Near to the house is a wood frame shed (HS01C) on a wood foundation with walls and roof made of corrugated sheet metal. This utilitarian structure was probably used for storage and could have been easily moved around the yard as needed. Two outhouses (HS01D and HS01E) located in the salvage yard do not appear to be associated with any other buildings. It is possible that these items were part of Keys' salvage operation. The outhouses are constructed of board frame and vertical board siding with corrugated metals roofs.

Toward the end of his life, Keys appeared in a few Walt Disney produced television movies. A plywood shed (HS01G) was built by the crew filming "Chico the Misunderstood Coyote" in 1961. Keys moved the building to the ranch after the filming and most likely used the building for storage.

The tack house (HS01H) is immediately adjacent to the tool house. This very unusual structure was used for the storage of horse equipment such as saddles and bridles. It was constructed of two circular wooden tanks salvaged from a gold ore processing mill with one placed upside down on top of the other and a door cut through the side of the tanks. The tanks were of slightly smaller diameter at the top than at the bottom. The resulting cylindrical structure has a pinched-in or slightly hourglass-like profile at the center.

The chicken coop (HS01F), located north of the main house, is a deteriorated plywood structure with a shed roof of corrugated metal, wood frame resting on the soil, screen door, and horizontal walls of unfinished wood on a wood frame. Part of an old automobile in the yard served as a chicken roost.

Mining was Bill Keys' primary source of income and he owned several claims in connection with the Desert Queen Mine. At the ranch he erected a small stamp mill and Chilean mill where he processed his ore from his mine as well as that brought in by other prospectors. The mule-powered arrastra (HS01L), although associated with ore processing, could never have been a functioning structure and was used primarily as a visitor attraction. The machine shed (HS01O) consists of a wooden frame covered with corrugated sheet metal. The building housed many tools and was built in the location of the former McHaney adobe cabins.

The adobe hopper, also referred to as the ore hopper (HS01P), is located at the northern end of the machine shop and was erected in the late 1950's. Directly next to it is a shaft (15' to 20' deep) from which Keys dug clay to put in the hopper to make adobe brick. He even acquired adobe brick-making machinery, although he never made many adobe bricks. This group of utilitarian structures was constructed south of the ranch house in close proximity to each other. The machine shop serves as a boundary between the utility area and the orchard and garden.

The water tower (HS01Q) at the north end of the machine shop was built to store water for the orchard and garden area. The metal windmill (HS01R) pumped water from the well (HS01KK) below it to the tank. Water was also pumped with the gasoline engine at the base of the mill. Part of the ranch was

covered by a system of pipes and faucets that were used to irrigate the orchard as well as pump water into the house. Evidence of this system is still visible in the orchard area and near the tank. A water well (HS01II) adjacent to the house provided water for household use. This brick-lined well has a fieldstone and mortar base with a superstructure constructed of curved tree branches.

The area east of the wash was used predominately for ore processing. The Huntington Mill (HS01CC) is the only large-scale remnant of that use. This wood frame mechanical structure, powered by an old automobile engine, was built on a slope and used gravity to feed the ore through the amalgamation process. The remains of an earthen ramp may have been used by trucks to access the mill.

There were many water impoundments (tanks) in the area before the lake was created. The dams were originally constructed as earthen reservoirs but were washed out by heavy rainfall. The Keys family constructed and improved an elaborate system of dams to collect rainwater runoff in the homestead area, Cow Camp and Barker Dam. The dam southeast of the main house (HS01V), the largest of the three dams on the ranch, was positioned between the rocks where the side walls were fairly close, requiring fewer materials to build it. Remains of the wooden catwalk used during construction are still evident below the dam. Keys rebuilt many of these with concrete, working slowly to complete the projects. The dams vary in size and shape. The small, angular dam behind the north house is the final structure (HS01X) built to prevent water from escaping the reservoir. A short distance north of the north house is an arched dam (HS01AA) that appears to be taller and narrower than the others.

A 350 foot stone retaining wall (HS01GG) runs along the dry wash. This retaining wall would have prevented water from washing away the orchard and prevented further erosion of the stream bank. By extending the wall out into the wash, Keys expanded his usable orchard and garden area by backfilling with good soil behind it. A portion of the wall closest to the house is constructed of mortared granite blocks and stands approximately 6' high; the rest of the wall is made of smaller drylaid granite fieldstones. As the wall curves it transitions into a low drylaid wall that follows the dry wash. Another low, mortared wall cuts across the wash forming a dam-like structure.

The crane (HS01JJ) that Keys used to build these walls and dams still remains. Located near the unfinished dam wall, Keys constructed the crane on a fifteen foot mast set into the ground. This mast supports a timber derrick hinged at the base with a metal pivot.

The large boulders surrounding the ranch often provided shelter from the sun and animals. The Keys' utilized nearby caves (HS01BB) to serve various uses. One cave amongst the boulders southwest of and across the road from the corrals held Keys' assaying equipment including chemicals and a furnace. This cave also contains wooden forms used in the fabrication of wagon wheels. Another cave with associated dry-laid masonry walls east of the homestead was used for drying meat and storing food. Today this cave contains remnants of furniture and supplies. Another cave west of the homestead may have been utilized by Keys' sons as a hangout. (Joan Jackson, PC, 1999) However its location and reported use has not been confirmed.

The Keys family cemetery is located adjacent to the Desert Queen Ranch but is not included in this inventory because it is still privately held and maintained by family members.

Barker Dam (HS03B) and the dam at Cow Camp (HS05A) are similar to the dams at the ranch where Keys incorporated existing boulders into the design. Built in a narrow valley, Keys rebuilt the Cow Camp Dam that was originally built during the cattle-rustling era. Keys' concrete dam replaced the original one constructed by the McHaney Gang. Keys and his family also rebuilt the Barker Dam which was built adjacent to the original Barker Dam and is downstream of the Meyers Dam (HS03A) (Keys and

Kidwell, 1997: 84). At the base of the Barker dam, is a low concrete wall that forms a catchment basin (HS03D). The basin catches overflow and leakage from the dam reservoir. Keys used the water from both dams for watering cattle that he grazed in the immediate area.

At Cow Camp and Barker Dam, the ranchers obtained and stored water for their livestock in troughs and dams. Remnants of these water systems are still extant. The water troughs and small rock walls that formed the catchment basin were probably constructed by Keys. The extant Cow Camp structures include: a chimney (HS 05B) from the McHaney cabin and a low retaining wall in the vicinity of the documented agricultural area.

Non-contributing buildings and structures have been built by the park service at the southern end of the Desert Queen Ranch subsequent to Keys' death. This part of the ranch was used by Keys for cattle grazing and other ranching activities. The caretaker's residence consists of a recreational vehicle provided by the volunteer. Other recent additions include a maintenance work shed, the visitor parking lot and a visitor comfort station. The introduction of these non-contributing structures negatively impacts the historic character of the Desert Queen Ranch. The ranch entry experience for visitors has been altered by locating these facilities in an area which was not historically used for those purposes.

Although recent additions negatively impact the historic district, the remaining historic buildings and structures retain their integrity as contributing features to the district landscape.



Buildings and Structures #1: Desert Queen Ranch guest house, looking north. (PGSO, LCS, 1992)



Buildings and Structures #2: Desert Queen Ranch south house (schoolhouse), looking northeast. (PGOS, LCS, 1992)



Buildings and Structures #3: Desert Queen Ranch ore (adobe) hopper, looking northeast (PGSO, LCS, 1992)



Buildings and Structures #4: Desert Queen ranch main house, looking northeast. (PGSO, LCS, 1992)



Buildings and Structures #5: Desert Queen Ranch water tower, looking northwest. (PGSO, LCS, 1992)



Buildings and Structures #6: Desert Queen Ranch machine shop, looking northeast. (PGSO, CLI, 1992)



Buildings and Structures #7: Desert Queen Ranch tack house, looking north. (PGSO, LCS, 1992)



Buildings and Structures #8: Desert Queen Ranch huntington mill, looking southeast. (PGSO, LCS, 1992)



Buildings and Structures #9: Desert Queen Ranch, construction of reservoir dam, looking north. (Joshua Tree National Park archives, accession #693-124, ca. 1940)



Buildings and Structures #10: Desert Queen Ranch Dam behind the north house, looking north (PGSO, LCS, 1992)



Buildings and Structures #11: Desert Queen Ranch retaining wall, looking northwest. (PGSO, CLI slide #JOTR-S-0004-1, 1999)



Buildings and Structures #12: Cow Camp chimney, looking north. (PGSO, LCS, 1992)



Buildings and Structures #13: Cow Camp retaining wall associated with agricultural area, looking south. (PGSO, CLI negative #JOTR-N-0003-9, 1999)



Buildings and Structures #14: Cow Camp dam from above, looking north. (PGSO, LCS, 1992)



Buildings and Structures #15: Barker Dam from behind, looking north. (PGSO, LCS, 1992)



Buildings and Structures #16: Barker Dam catchment basin, looking northwest. (PGSO, LCS, 1992)

Characteristic Feature	Type Of Contribution	LCS Structure Name	IDLCS Number	Structure Number
Barker Dam	Contributing	Barker Dam	09466	HS03B
Catchment Basin	Contributing	Barker Dam Catchment Basin	09467	HS03D
Cow Camp Chimney	Contributing	Cow Camp Chimney	05605	HS05B
Cow Camp Dam	Contributing	Cow Camp Dam	05604	HS05A
Cow Camp Retaining Wall	Contributing	Cow Camp Small Dam	005605	HS05E
Keys Ranch Arched Dam	Contributing	Keys Ranch Arched Dam	05598	HS01AA
Keys Ranch Arrastra	Contributing	Keys Ranch Arrastra	05586	HS01L
Keys Ranch Cave Shelter	Contributing	Keys Ranch Cave Shelter	56330	HS01BB
Keys Ranch Chicken Coop	Contributing	Keys Ranch Chicken Coop	0580	HS01F
Keys Ranch Crane	Contributing	Keys Ranch Crane	58510	HS01JJ

Keys Ranch Dam Behind North House	Contributing	Keys Ranch Dam Behind North House	05595	HS01X
Keys Ranch Dam SE of Ranch House	Contributing	Keys Ranch Dam Se Of Ranch House	05593	HS01V
Keys Ranch Disney Shed	Contributing	Keys Ranch Disney Shed	05581	HS01G
Keys Ranch Girls Outhouse	Contributing	Keys Ranch Girls Outhouse	05578	HS01D
Keys Ranch Guest House	Contributing	Keys Ranch Guest House	05583	HS01I
Keys Ranch Huntington Mill	Contributing	Keys Ranch Huntington Mill	05599	HS01CC
Keys Ranch Machine Shed	Contributing	Keys Ranch Machine Shed	05588	HS01O
Keys Ranch Main House	Contributing	Keys Ranch Main House	05575	HS01A
Keys Ranch Mens Outhouse	Contributing	Keys Ranch Mens Outhouse	05579	HS01E
Keys Ranch North House	Contributing	Keys Ranch North House	05594	HS01W
Keys Ranch North House Double Outhouse	Contributing	Keys Ranch North House Double Outhouse	05596	HS01Y
Keys Ranch North House Single Outhouse	Contributing	Keys Ranch North House Single Outhouse	05597	HS01Z
Keys Ranch Ore Hopper	Contributing	Keys Ranch Ore Hopper	05589	HS01P
Keys Ranch Retaining Wall	Contributing	Keys Ranch Retaining Wall	05601	HS01GG
Keys Ranch Schoolhouse	Contributing	Keys Ranch Schoolhouse	05584	HS01J
Keys Ranch Shed	Contributing	Keys Ranch Shed	05577	HS01C
Keys Ranch South House	Contributing	Keys Ranch South House	05592	HS01T
Keys Ranch Storehouse	Contributing	Keys Ranch Storehouse	05576	HS01B
Keys Ranch Tack House	Contributing	Keys Ranch Tack House	05582	HS01H
Keys Ranch Water Tower	Contributing	Keys Ranch Water Tower	05590	HS01Q
Keys Ranch Well Near House	Contributing	Keys Ranch Well Near House	58509	HS01II

Keys Ranch West House Ruins	Contributing	Keys Ranch West House Ruins	05587	HS01M
Keys Ranch Windmill	Contributing	Keys Ranch Windmill	05591	HS01R
Meyers Dam	Contributing	Meyers Dam	09465	HS03A
Well	Contributing	Adobe Pit & Winch	58511	58511
Barker Dam Interpretive Trail	Non-Contributing			
Barker Dam Parking Lot	Non-Contributing			
Caretakers RV (temporary)	Non-Contributing			
Comfort Station	Non-Contributing			
Maintenance Shed	Non-Contributing			
Visitor Parking Lot	Non-Contributing			

Circulation

The canyon walls that surround Hidden Valley form the natural barriers between which the early settlers built the first roads and trails. The valley floors and alluvial washes were relatively flat and easier to travel through than the surrounding boulders and rocky hills. Historically, the typical means of accessing isolated areas in the desert would have been by foot and horseback (horses, burros and mules), and later by vehicles. The washes were often used for travelling during the dry months because they were flat and devoid of scrub and other obstacles. However, when the washes had water in them or were saturated from rains, higher dry land routes had to be used through the valley floor scrub. This historic use of the washes is still evident in aerial photographs that show dirt road/path traces leading in and out of the washes throughout the valley.

The Desert Queen Ranch, Cow Camp and the Barker Dam were built on the east side of Hidden Valley and were accessed from the alluvial fans and washes which emerged from the Wonderland of Rocks. As Keys developed the ranch, dams, and mines, the primary circulation routes to his holdings were unpaved roads on the valley floor (visible in early historic photographs of the ranch) and paths across the Wonderland of Rocks.

Primary access to the ranch and dams was by an unpaved road along the east side of Hidden Valley. The town of Twentynine Palms was reached by using this road which enters Hidden Valley from Lost Horse Valley. Today this road is graveled and passes to the west of both the Barker Dam and Cow Camp. The road continues northwest where it leads towards Quail Spring and eventually the town of Joshua Tree. A spur off this road heads east where it ends at the Desert Queen Ranch. As the road approaches the schoolhouse and corral at the ranch, the road splits into an interconnected patchwork that links many of the buildings and structures throughout the ranch complex.

The gravel road up the east side of Hidden Valley also appears to have had road and trail spurs which lead into both Cow Camp and Barker Dam. Vehicle access would have been needed for the hauling of materials and for the construction of the dams. Another spur extended into the corral area south of the Barker Dam, which is now a visitor parking lot. It is unclear if the current road follows the historic alignment.

The road alignment from the Barker Dam to the Desert Queen Ranch appears to be the same alignment at the end of the period of significance although it is unclear at what point this road became the permanent alignment for access to the Desert Queen Ranch and dams.

Paths lead from the ranch into the surrounding hills. Some of these are reported to lead to Cow Camp, Barker Dam, adjacent mines and other outlying areas (Jackson, personal communication, 1999). A trail from the Barker Dam leads west to the Wall Street Mill area. These trails may have been developed by Keys and his family to travel and haul materials between these sites.

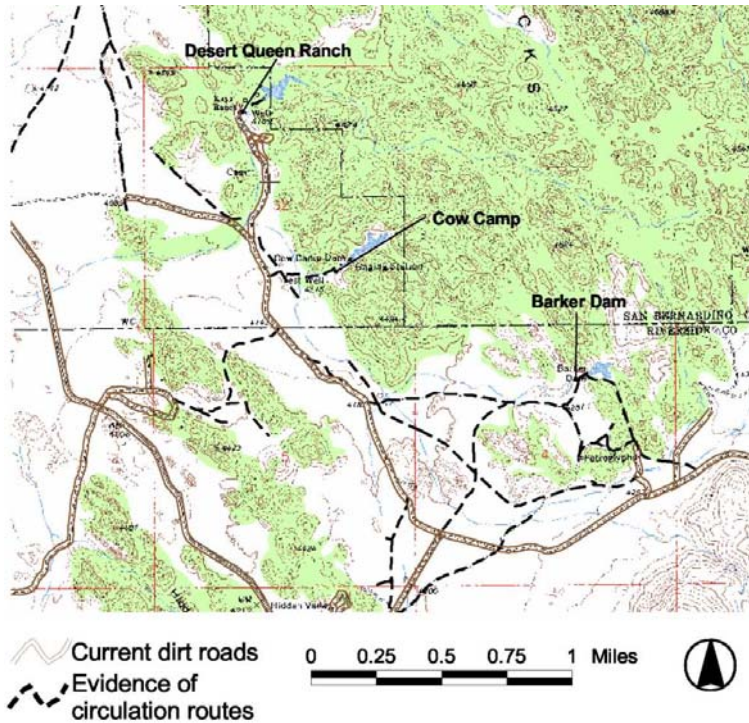
CHANGES SINCE THE PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE

Road, trail and parking additions were made south of the Barker Dam in an area formerly used by Keys as a corral for loading and branding cattle. Proposed improvements to the Hidden Valley Campground and Barker Dam staging area will result in some road realignment and paving of portions of the gravel road. Although this portion of the road system is outside of the district boundary, it will still impact the integrity of the road system that connected the ranch to its component sites.

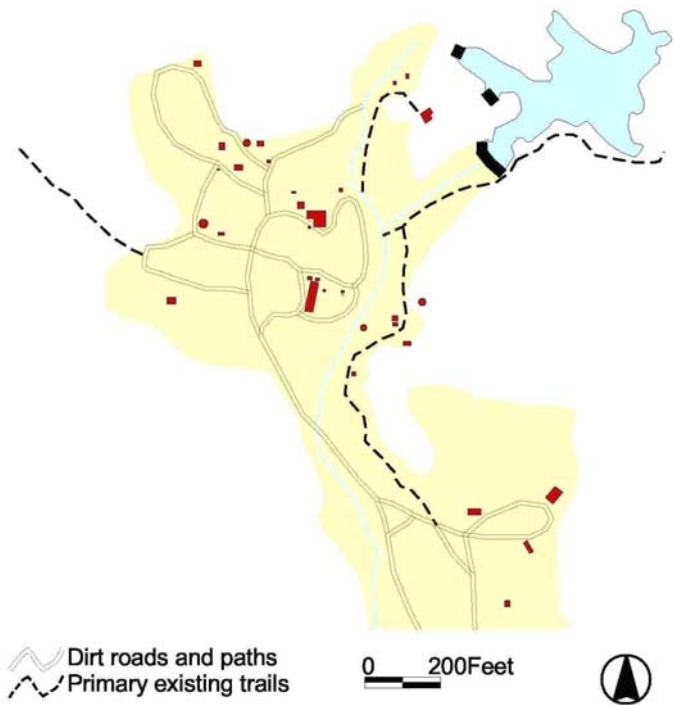
A new trail has been constructed to the recently built comfort station at the Desert Queen Ranch. It is

unclear how much of the original road and trail system near the south house has been impacted by the introduction of the caretaker's residence, maintenance shed and visitor parking area. However, park maintenance staff has indicated the loop roads were installed in 1973/74 and the VIP area in 1989/90.

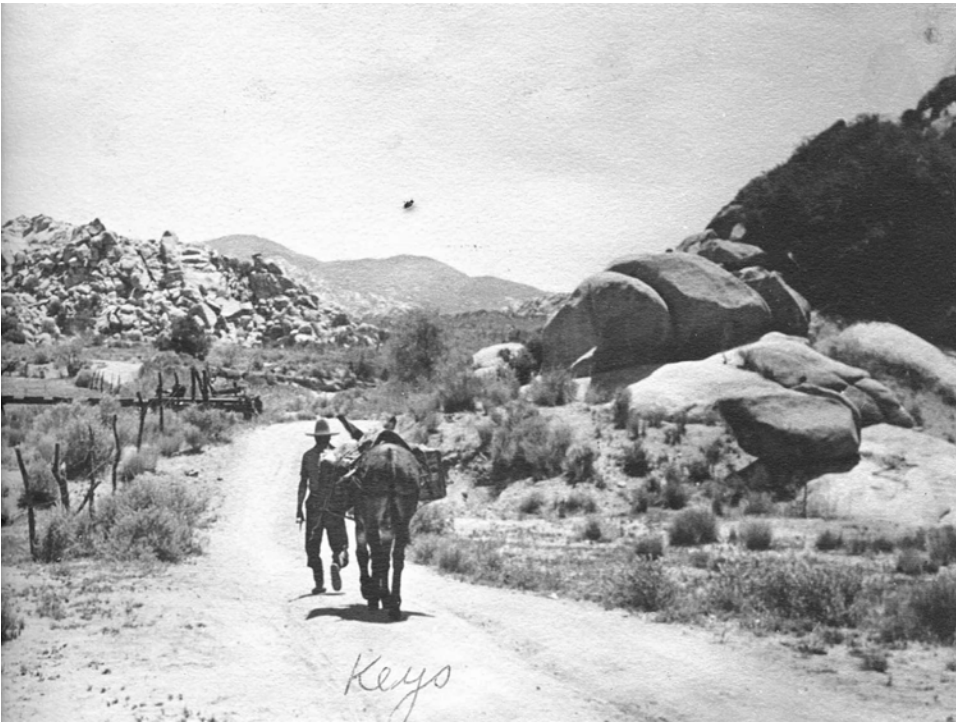
Despite the recent modifications that have been made to the road and trail systems, the unpaved roads and trails throughout the district retain integrity as circulation elements both within and between the various components of the ranch complex.



Circulation #1: Current evidence of circulation patterns. (PGSO, CLI, ArcView file, 1999. Source: DRG from JOTR GIS staff)



Circulation #2: Homestead area general circulation routes. (PGSO, CLI, ArcView file, 1999)



Circulation #3: Historic photo of William F. Keys leaving the Desert Queen Ranch, heading south, no date. (Joshua Tree National Park archives, accession #531-121, n.d.)

Characteristic Feature	Type Of Contribution	LCS Structure Name	IDLCS Number	Structure Number
Roads and Trails	Contributing	Keys Ranch Roads And Trails	56047	HS0100
Barker Dam Visitor Trail	Non-Contributing			
Loop Road, Parking, and Trail to the Comfort Station	Non-Contributing	Loop Road, Parking And Trail To The Comfort Station At The Desert Queen Ranch Visitor Staging Area loop Road, Parking And Trail To The Comfort Station at The Desert Queen Ranch Visitor Staging Area desert Queen Ranch Visitor Staging Area		
Road, parking lot and trail to Barker Dam	Non-Contributing	Road, Parking Lot And Trail To Barker Dam		

Cluster Arrangement

THE DESERT QUEEN RANCH

The overall organization of the primary buildings and structures of the Desert Queen Ranch could be characterized as centralized, compact and small-scale. The buildings and structures were built by the Keys' in close proximity to one another and were interconnected by roads and trails so that they could be accessed by mule, motor vehicle, or by foot. The building clusters are arranged primarily by use and are linked by an interconnected system of dirt roads and paths. Five clusters dominate the organization of the ranch: 1) the ranch house, orchard and gardens, 2) the ore processing area, 3) the machine shop, maintenance and mechanical area, 4) the barn and corral, and 5) the salvage yard.

RANCH HOUSE, ORCHARD, AND GARDENS CLUSTER

The house is central to the layout of the ranch and is located at the base of a boulder outcrop on the north side of the valley. From the house, the Keys family had easy access to the other ranch areas. Moving clockwise, the garden, orchards, and dam are to the east of the ranch house, the mining facilities to the southeast along the wash, the machine shop and maintenance area to the south, the barn and corrals to the southwest, and the salvage yard to the west.

The house is surrounded by fences and walls which were built to keep livestock and other animals away from the house and gardens. Most of the essential household functions occurred within this area. To the west, this area is bounded by a Joshua tree fence which extends south towards the corral. Between this fence and the house were the storeroom, firewood stockpile, a washing machine and an outdoor eating area. Each of these features was close to the kitchen and the well, which was located immediately south of the kitchen and provided water for cooking and cleaning. In this same area was an outdoor eating area that was immediately adjacent to the kitchen. Historic photos show the picnic table under a pinion pine that no longer exists. Immediately south of the well are tables along the vegetable garden fence that are loaded with glass and other artifacts that Mrs. Keys collected and displayed. Immediately adjacent to the well and the south side of the house, the Keys' had access to their orchard, vegetable and household gardens. Within this centralized area, most of the essential household functions overseen by Mrs. Keys appear to have taken place.

Most, but not all, of the features associated with the house are still in close proximity to the house including the well fences, storeroom, woodpiles and washing machine. The gardens no longer exist and only remnants of the orchard remain.

ORE PROCESSING CLUSTER

The area east of the wash was used predominately for ore processing. Located south of the ranch house and on the east side of the dry wash, the processing area was away from the domestic and agricultural areas. Structures associated with the ore processing include the Huntington mill, the Chilean mill, and the five-stamp mill. This cluster of structures appears to have taken advantage of its proximity to the wash to dispose of waste materials. It is likely that water from the dam was used at these mills, however this remains unconfirmed.

Many of the structures in this area were disassembled by Keys leaving only remnants of the original structures. The five-stamp and Chilean mills are primarily ruins but the Huntington mill has been temporarily stabilized.

MACHINE SHOP MAINTENANCE AND MECHANICS CLUSTER

South of the ranch house and next to the barn is the machine shop which contains numerous tools and mechanical parts used throughout the ranch. Adjacent to the shop is the water tower which was fed by

the windmill and well to the east. Immediately north of the machine shop is the adobe hopper and borrow pit used to extract and process adobe soils. Adobe brick-making machinery was reportedly located adjacent to the hopper.

The machine shop shed has been stabilized and still contains many of the tools and objects that Keys kept there although many have also been reportedly moved or taken. The water tower still functions next to the shop. The adobe hopper and pit are still intact. The brick-making machine may have been relocated near the arrastra since Keys' death.

BARN AND CORRAL CLUSTER

Immediately southwest of the house and adjacent to the machine shop are the barn and corral used for holding livestock. A variety of fences were built over time to contain the livestock and include the willow fences and the Joshua tree fence built by Keys in the early 1950s. The different corral spaces were apparently used to separate the animals depending on how tame they were. The close proximity of the barn and corral to the orchard and vegetable garden minimized the effort of hauling the animal manure to the gardens where it was used as fertilizer. Presently, the east side of the corral is open but would have been part of the enclosure created by the adobe barn.

The adobe barn is now a ruin. The corral fences are still standing but in need of stabilization and repair.

SALVAGE YARD CLUSTER

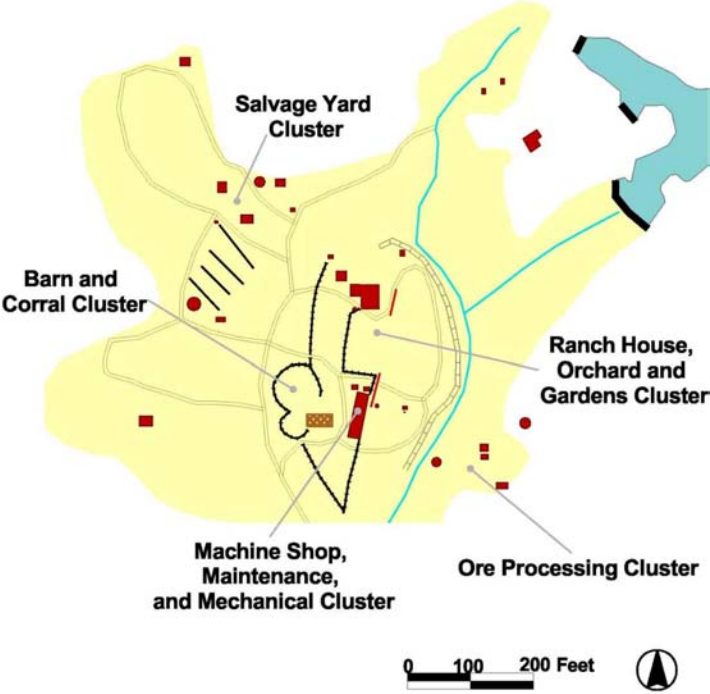
The area west of the house was used to store Keys' vast collection of salvaged materials. Cars, wagons, wheels, machinery parts, mining equipment, gasoline engines, mining hoists, ore crushers, colored glass, household items like bed frames and stoves, and any other any spare materials that might be marketable were brought back to ranch to be stored and often sold. These articles were arranged within the salvage yard into orderly rows that were easily accessible by the loop road through the area. Other items in the area were often of interest to visitors such as the arrastra and one-stamp mill which apparently were not used for ore-processing on the ranch.

OTHER

Although not a cluster, the south schoolhouse was located further south of the ranch than the other ranch buildings, probably to ensure the privacy necessary for the instruction of the students. The schoolhouse has been recently stabilized. (WACC Project #JOTR 1999 E, see Kuffer, MaGee, and Keswick, draft, 1999)

Any clustering attributes within the canyons and flat spaces at Cow Camp and Barker Dam were associated with corralling, watering, and the branding of Keys' cattle.

The integrity of the cluster arrangements, although modified to varying degrees since Keys' death, retain integrity as contributing elements to the Keys Ranch historic district. Cluster features are not identified here since they have been previously identified as individual building or structural components.



Cluster Arrangement: Five clusters at Desert Queen Ranch. (PGSO, CLI, ArcView file, 1999)

Land Use

The principal land uses at Keys Ranch historic district included ranching, agriculture, ore processing and a wide range of other homesteading activities. These land uses did not always occupy discrete areas since some of the activities and their locations overlapped. None of these uses exist today. The ranch now functions as an historic site that is preserved and interpreted by the National Park Service. However, the patterns of land use within the Keys Ranch historic district are still evident today.

Within the context of the desert environment, land uses were limited. Mining was one of the primary means to make a living in the Mojave desert, as was open range cattle grazing. Agriculture was limited and highly dependent upon access to water. Under these circumstances, homesteading was difficult, but not impossible, and required both ingenuity and tenacity to succeed.

AGRICULTURE

The agricultural areas at the homestead included vegetable gardens, orchards and animal feed crops. These were typically grown in the flat valley bottoms where there was access to water. The main vegetable garden and orchard were located adjacent to the ranch house. However, historic photos, archeological evidence, and accounts of life on the ranch indicate that crop production changed over time in regards to the location of the plots, the amount planted, and the type of crops grown. The extent of the agricultural activities at the ranch is evidenced by the few remaining plants and obvious soil disturbances. Over the years the plants have not been maintained and many have been lost.

Certainly one of the prime determinants for what was grown would have been how many people needed to be fed. Keys started ranching as a single man whom later married and raised a family. After his children left the ranch and when he was in prison, the amount of area cultivated by Mrs. Keys would have been significantly reduced. In later years, after the death of his wife, the need for land to raise food would again have diminished.

A variety of historic sources indicate that numerous areas around the ranch were farmed. In addition to the gardens at the house, historic photos show crops being raised on the slope below the Keys Ranch dam. Archeological evidence indicates that the area east of the entry road and on top of the exposed middens was also used for agriculture. (Schneider and Wright, Keys Ranch Road Profile, field notebook, 1997) Evidence of crop furrowing still exists near the five-stamp mill.

Other motivation for raising crops may have been to ensure ownership. A historic photo shows Keys harvesting rye at Cow Camp. According to one account, Keys did this to demonstrate his use of the land in order secure title.

No evidence of crops being raised at the Barker Dam was found.

RANCHING

Raising livestock relied heavily on the use of open grazing in the desert although supplemental food was needed to keep the operation going year round. Although Keys' primary emphasis was on raising cattle, at one point in the 1920's, he experimented with raising Angora goats. The extent of the stock raising activities at the ranch are evidenced by a remaining corral, water troughs and fencing. The cattle no longer remain at the site and some of the fencing at Cow Camp has not been maintained.

According to Willis Keys, his father didn't like to raise more than about sixty five cattle at a time since he did not feel that he had enough range or feed to take on any more. The cattle had summer and winter grazing patterns. Willis states that his father used Lost Horse Valley, Queen Valley and the area around

Quail Springs for summer pasture. In winter, they used Pleasant Valley during the coldest months.

Cow Camp was also used as a cattle resting and watering spot. The remains of a shelter attributed to the earlier McHaney cattle rustling operation is located on the flat below the dam. The cattle rustlers stayed in the area to guard and tend to their herd.

The Barker Dam area was both a water source and round-up area for cattle. The round-up corral was located in the vicinity of the current parking lot and apparently had a cattle chute for loading them into trucks. Within protective canyon walls, cattle were corralled and watered by regulating flow from the dam above. Cattle were also branded in this area. (Keys and Kidwell, 1997:46) The legality of Keys' restricting public access to the water at the dam blurred public land use history there.

Many of the cattle were sold off in 1943 by Mrs. Keys to pay legal bills for her husband but it is unclear whether William F. Keys continued cattle ranching after his return from prison. By the time of Keys' death in 1969, few if any domesticated animals remained on the ranch.

Other animals on the farm included horses, burros, cows, goats, chickens, and bees. The horses, cows and burros were kept in the Joshua Tree corral to the west of the adobe barn as well as the fenced yard to the south. The chicken coop was located northwest of the house, and the beehives may have been moved around but are thought to have been located west of the house and corral.

MINING

The ore processing machinery was located south of the ranch house along the dry wash. At various points in time, Keys had a five-stamp mill, a one-stamp mill, an arrastra for grinding the ore, a Chilean mill and a Huntington mill all within close proximity to each other along the dry wash. The extent of the ore processing activities at the ranch are evidenced by the remaining five-stamp mill ruin, Huntington Mill, arrastra and Chilean mill ruin. Most of the ore processing related structures are now ruins but still convey the associations of the mining activities that took place at the ranch.

The milling process typically required access to water and a runoff channel. The dam provided the water source and the residue from the mills was drained into the dry wash. Tailings from the mining operation were also spread out on the land. Recent archeological testing along the ranch road shows a layer of mill tailings under organic matter.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Storage areas for a variety of needs were important on the ranch. Nearby caves, which stayed cool in the summer, were used to store food and explosives. Keys also stored a wide assortment of used mining and ranching equipment throughout the ranch. Cars, wagons, wheels, machinery parts, mining equipment, gasoline engines, mining hoists, ore crushers, colored glass, household items like bed frames and stoves, and any other any spare materials that might be marketable were brought back to ranch to be stored and often sold. These articles were scattered in a number of places around the homestead including the machine shop east of the adobe barn, and a large area to the west and northwest of the house where whole automobiles and rows of tables containing small parts were located. The sale of these items was a source of income for the Keys family.

Several schoolhouses and homes for teachers were built over the years. Numerous photos show the children cleaning the area around the schoolhouse. The residences for the teachers were located away from the ranch house but within the perimeter of the ranch complex.

The family cemetery is located south west of the ranch complex. Although not owned by the park

service, this is an important land use feature of the ranch.

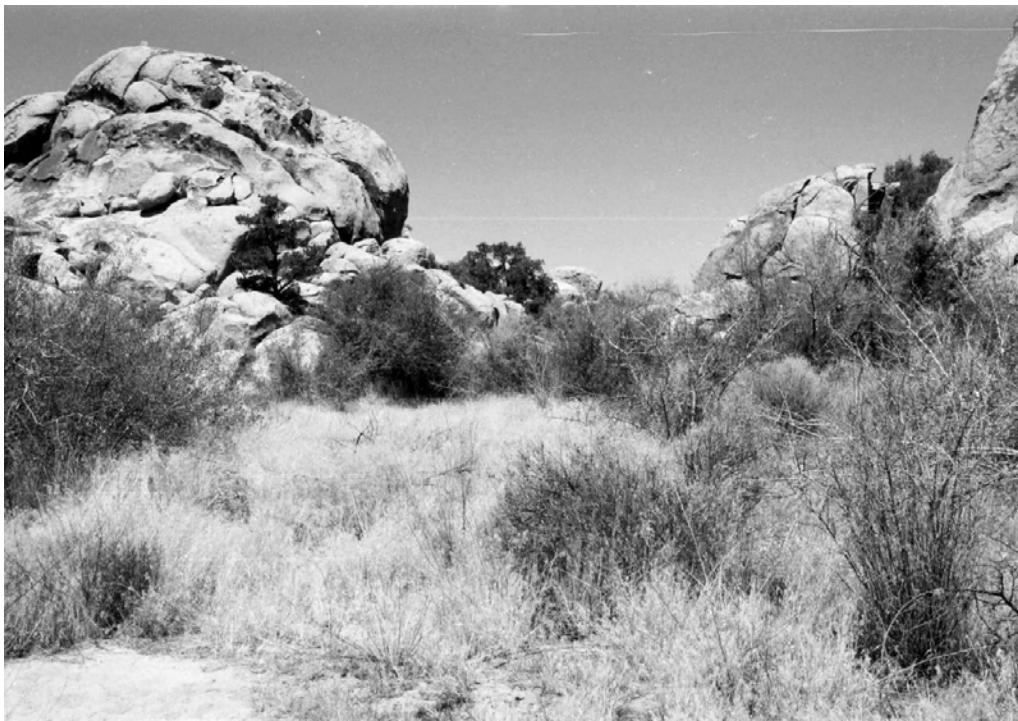
Because the district is no longer managed as a functioning ranch, the historic land use of the ranch no longer exists and therefore does not retain integrity. However, many of the landscape characteristics on the site impart the feeling of the ranching, agricultural, and ore processing activities that dominated the property throughout its history.



Land Use #1 Desert Queen Ranch, land use patterns in the corral area, looking northeast. (Joshua Tree National Park archives, accession #693-115, n.d.)



Land Use #2: William Keys sharpening a scythe at Cow Camp, rye in background. The retaining wall is in the notch at rear, compare with other land use photo; looking northwest. (Joshua Tree National Park archives, accession #693-123, n.d.)



Land Use #3: Comparison image of Cow Camp, looking northwest. (PGSO, CLI negative #JOTR-N-0001-5, 1999)

Natural Systems And Features

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

The park is a meeting ground for both the Colorado and Mojave deserts and is a part of the desert region known as the Basin and Range Province. The terrain consists of low, generally east-west trending mountains interspersed with intermontane valleys: a setting characteristic of much of the western Mojave region. The park is dominated by a crystalline rock terrain, although its valleys are largely mantled by unconsolidated or poorly consolidated Quaternary surface deposits. Rocks in the park comprise metamorphic assemblages that include Paleozoic and Precambrian rocks which are thought to be about eight hundred million years old. The relief of the area is due to extensive block faulting by which large sections of the earth's crust have been broken, tilted and raised. The area is notable for the relief formed by block faulting and subsequent erosion.

Millions of years ago, the landscape had rolling hills covered with a soil mantle that had developed in a hot, semi-arid to humid climate, with 80% more precipitation and 30% less evaporation than is typical today. Since that time, changes in climate have resulted in present day erosion rates that exceed rates of soil formation, removing the residual soils and associated vegetative cover from steeper hillsides and creating the huge rounded and angular granitic boulders/boulder piles (GMP/EIS, 1994: 141-142). These rock outcroppings and boulder piles were the natural barriers around which the Keys Ranch historic district, its dams and agricultural and grazing areas developed.

CLIMATE

The park has an arid upland desert climate. Eastern lowlands frequently reach summer temperatures above 115 degrees. Western higher elevations have winters with snow and extended periods with night time lows well below freezing. The summer months typically have high temperatures, low humidity and clear sunny days.

Summer storms from July through September can be very dramatic but are usually localized in effects. Thunderstorms from the southwest or southeast bring high winds, lightning and sometime heavy rain. The storms can cause flash floods, but the majority of the annual precipitation, one to seven inches, results from the winter rains. The summer precipitation, combined with the cooler higher elevations, help create the unique conditions that support the existence of the Joshua tree woodlands.

The Desert Queen Ranch was subject to varied weather extremes ranging from the droughts in the late 1920s and mid 30s, to the flood of 1938 and the severe cold that froze the surface of the reservoir in the winter of 1948-49 (Keys and Kidwell, 1997: 24).

WATER RESOURCES

Water, or access to it, was critical for survival in the harsh desert environment. Within the park, there are few known water tables near the surface. Rainfall is inadequate to charge underground water sources. Surface water flows off without percolating back into the aquifer. The Desert Queen Ranch, Cow Camp and the Barker Dam are all part of the Quail Wash drainage pattern in Hidden Valley that exits the park near the west entrance.

Naturally occurring water sources are rare in the park with only 120 known sources that include springs, wells, seeps and one short perennial stream. Flows from springs and seeps range from seasonal dampness to about seven gallons per minute. The majority of the springs flow from fractures and joints in the base rock and appear to be supported by local aquifers. Water monitoring indicates that the discharge at springs is decreasing. This condition is supported by the observation of local residents and could be a result of climate change, changes in vegetation, sampling error or natural variation. These

springs can support prolific vegetation with little or no surface water.

Floods are a sporadic natural occurrence in all of the drainages in the park. Surface flows occur in most drainages only as a result of heavy precipitation and are typically short lived, lasting only a few hours or days. The areas used by Keys for his ranch and cattle grazing were all in drainage areas subject to flood and flash flood conditions.

Within the park, there are a number of artificial water impoundments. The largest of these are the three reservoirs associated with Keys ranch. These all occur within the Keys Ranch historic district and include Keys Ranch Dam (made up of three dam structures: the Keys Ranch Dam and the North House Dams), Cow Camp Dam and the Barker Dam. These reservoirs contain significant amounts of water most years and were constructed to provide water for ranching, mining and agriculture. All three reservoirs support adjacent riparian areas.

To meet the year round need for a constant and potable water, a series of wells were developed in the area by Bill McHaney, George Meyers and William F. Keys. These typically provided water for household, agricultural, mining and ranching needs. This was not necessarily an easy task in this region; one attempt at developing a well for the Lost Horse Mine was reported to have been dug 985 feet before giving up. The wells at the Desert Queen Ranch were relatively close to the surface: "That well out in the middle of the orchard... was about eighteen feet deep." (Keys and Kidwell, 1997: 17-18).

NATIVE PLANT COMMUNITIES

The east-west Transverse ranges support examples of Mojave and Colorado desert ecosystems. The elevations range from 6,000 feet to near sea level, which creates an unusual compressed transition zone between the two deserts and contains examples of several plant communities that are reflected in the diversity of the plant material found in the Keys Ranch historic district.

The fans and hills are characterized by scrub vegetation, specifically the creosote bush scrub community. Creosote bush (*Larrea divaricata*) is the most widely represented plant, although various cacti, yuccas, mesquite and other flora also occur. This community is typically on well-drained soils of slopes, fans and valleys in deserts, usually below 3,500 feet. This plant community's range is from the southern end of the Owens Valley to Mexico (Munz and Keck, 1970: 14). Occasional sand dunes or basins of loose sand provide rare habitats within this desert that are dominated by annual grasses which appear following spring rains. In areas that were heavily grazed, these annual grasses are often not the native species.

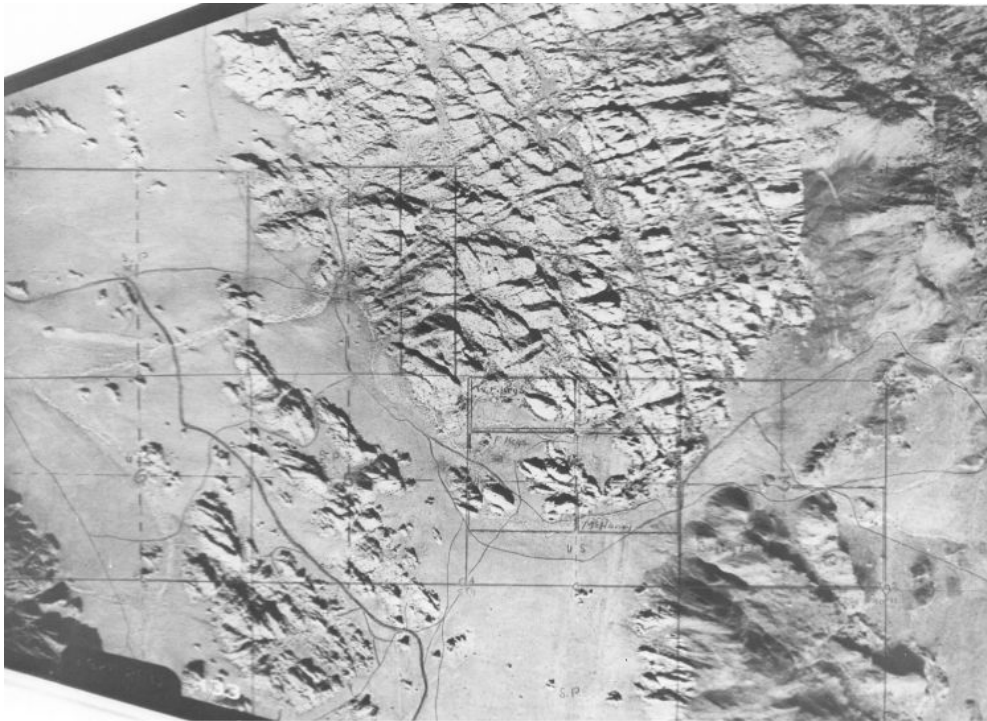
At about 2,500 feet, the Joshua tree woodland begins. The woodland is dominated by the Joshua tree (*Yucca brevifolia*), named by the Mormons possibly for the typically upright, often human-like appearance of its branches. This plant community is typical to well-drained mesas and slopes from 2,500 to 4000 feet or higher from the southern Owens Valley to the Little San Bernardino Mountains and southern Nevada and Utah. Annual rainfall ranges from 6-15 inches, which includes occasional summer showers. Although not a tree, these members of the agave family have tree-like form, are widely spaced and range from 10 to 30 feet in height. Associated plants in this community include Mojave yucca, *Nolina*, juniper, Mormon tea, cotton thorn, California buckwheat, bladder sage, boxthorn, and a variety of cacti (Ornduff, 1974: 111). Joshua tree woodlands are concentrated toward the west end of the park and become sparse as one moves east across the park.

Both the Joshua tree woodlands and the creosote bush scrub communities are interspersed with Shadescrub, a community in which saltbush (*Atriplex* spp.) is dominant. Many of the shrubs within this community have similar characteristics such as their size (about 2 feet), grayish leaves, heavily branched, small flowered and sometimes spiny in appearance. This community is tolerant of heavy,

often saline soils, and occurs on mesas and flatlands at elevation of 3,000 to 6,000 feet (Ornduff, 1974: 109).

At elevations above 4000 feet, especially in the Little San Bernardino, pinyon-juniper woodland appears. Juniper (*Juniperus* spp.), pinyon (*Pinus monophylla*) and desert scrub oak (*Quercus turbinella*) all occur along with various yuccas, nolina and other members of the scrub communities (Ornduff, 1974: 106).

The riparian areas pass through all of these plant communities. Within the park, the periodic washes support a riparian association of mesquite (*Prosopis* spp.), desert willow (*Chilopsis* spp.), smoke tree (*Parosela* spp.), paloverde (*Cercidium floridum*), various willows (*Salix* spp.) and cottonwood (*Populus Fremontii*), which is one of the few large native trees (30-100 feet) found in this desert environment. These riparian areas typically provide the water sources, which were critical for any settlements in the area including homesteading, mining and ranching.



Natural Systems and Features #1-Geology: Historic aerial photo showing rugged nature of the boulders and hills of the Wonderland of Rocks surrounding Keys holdings. (Joshua Tree National Park Archives, accession #531-I357, n.d.)



Natural Systems and Features #2-Climate: Weather extremes are common at the Desert Queen Ranch. Frances Keys at the "artifact table," looking northeast. (Joshua Tree National Park archives, accession #531-I18, n.d.)



Natural Systems and Features #3-Climate: Cow Camp during a dry year. Dam structure can be seen in the distance, looking northeast. (PGSO, CLI slide #JOTR-S-0004-21, 1999)



Natural Systems and Features #4-Water Resources: Barker Dam water level during a dry year, looking east. (PGSO, CLI slide #JOTR-S-0001-6, 1999)



Natural Systems and Features #5-Water Resources: 1917 photo of Keys reservoir which impounded water critical to the ranch, looking northwest. (Joshua Tree National Park archives, accession #531-I03, 1917)



Natural System and Features #6-Native Plant Communities: Creosote scrub vegetation near ranch house, looking southwest. (PGSO, CLI slide #JOTR-S-0003-10, 1999)



Natural Systems and Features #7-Native Plant Communities: Photo of Cow Camp vicinity from the entry road, looking east. (PGSO, CLI slide #JOTR-S-0001-2, 1999)

Small Scale Features

Numerous small-scale features remain from William F. Keys' occupation at the Desert Queen Ranch, Cow Camp and Barker Dam ranging from fences to salvage yard items and building ruins. Movable objects such as cars, wagons, and salvage yard objects are categorized as curatorial items and are not included in this document.

Keys built many fences and rock walls over time to enclose various areas of the ranch. The Joshua tree fences built by Keys in the early 1950s were constructed to keep the goats and other animals out of the garden and house area. These fences (HS01FF), including the small corral, were constructed of Joshua tree trunks laid on top of each other and held in place with vertical stakes of wood or metal bound with bailing wire. The main corral was built of willow rail fence. The rail fence is in the shape of a larger circle and is joined together with the smaller circle of Joshua tree fence. The different corral spaces were used to separate the animals depending on how tame they were. Presently, the east side of the corral is open but would have been part of the enclosure created by the adobe barn, now a ruin.

Two metal wire boundary fences (HS-01LL) along the main road into the ranch were built by Keys. One marks the boundary of the ranch property and the other marks the edge of the ranch complex.

There are a number of dry-laid rock wall fragments that exist in the northern part of the ranch. The area north of the North House has had little research and documentation so the origin and use of these walls is unknown but may have been part of Keys water management system or other unfinished projects.

The eastern side of the wash was used for various purposes. The remains of an unfinished adobe building (HS01S) built by Keys never had a roof. The ruin consists of an adobe wall with a masonry fireplace however its intended use is unknown. The fireplace is largely intact, but the adobe is badly eroded. Other features on the east side of the wash include old road traces that were used for moving materials in that area. The trailer ruin near the five-stamp mill may have been rented out for income as a residence in the 1960's (Jackson, personal communication, 1999). The east side of the wash also contains the remains of the Chilean mill (HS-01MM) and the five-stamp mill (HS-01NN).

One anomaly, the Joshua tree sculpture (HS01HH), is located in the salvage yard and illustrates Keys' inventiveness and humor. The fifteen foot high tree is supported by a stone and mortar base inscribed "Planted by Keys 22 March 1921, Age of tree 26,000 years".

The one stamp mill was salvaged from another mine and brought to the ranch to demonstrate gold milling. The wagons were used by Keys and family to haul ore and other materials. There is some speculation as to whether the wagons have been moved since Keys' death.

The rock-pile "grave" in front of the South House (schoolhouse) is not historic and does not contribute to the historic significance of Keys Ranch. Its creation is attributed to a former site caretaker after Keys' death.

Very few small-scale features remain dating from the 1879 to 1968 period of significance at Cow Camp. The remains of a barbed wire fence lays at the mouth of the valley. The fence was erected to enclose cattle by using the valley's natural configuration. A rock tank remains in a ravine at the north end of the canyon. Its construction is attributed to George Meyers. The tanks later held water for Barker and Shay cattle in the early 1900's. A well opening built by Barker and Shay is located near the cabin ruin. A dry-laid rock wall enclosure near the canyon walls in the documented agricultural area still exists although its function is unknown.

Two watering troughs at Barker Dam are on the List of Classified Structures. The features date from the William F. Keys period 1910-1968. The wooden watering trough (HS03B) and stone watering trough (HS03E) in combination with the dam, enabled Keys to use the stored rainwater for watering livestock in this area.

Although some small-scale features have disappeared or have been relocated since Keys death, the number and variety of these features remain intact. Their condition varies from fair to poor, but as a whole, the small-scale features retain integrity and are contributing features to the historic district.



Small Scale Features #1: Desert Queen Ranch Joshua tree fence, looking west. (PGSO, LCS, 1992)



Small Scale Features #2: Desert Queen Ranch adobe ruin with fireplace, looking north. (PGSO, LCS, 1992)



Small Scale Features #3: Barker Dam stone stock watering trough, looking north. (PGSO, CLI slide #JOTR-S-0004-23, 1999)

Characteristic Feature	Type Of Contribution	LCS Structure Name	IDLCS Number	Structure Number
Cow Camp Drylaid Wall	Contributing	Rock Alignment	274577	HS05D
Cow Camp Fence	Contributing	N/A		
Cow Camp Rock Tank	Contributing	Cow Camp Stock Watering Trough	274598	HS05C
Cow Camp Well	Contributing	Cow Camp Well	274600	HS05F
Fence	Contributing			
Five-Stamp Mill Ruin	Contributing	Keys Ranch Five-Stamp Mill Ruin	56044	HS01NN
Irrigation System	Contributing	Keys Ranch Irrigation System	56049	HS01PP
Keys Ranch Adobe Fireplace Ruin	Contributing	Keys Ranch Adobe Fireplace Ruin	08215	HS01S
Keys Ranch Agricultural Furrows	Contributing	N/A		
Keys Ranch Corral Willow Fence	Contributing	Keys Ranch Corral Willow Fence	274607	HS01RR
Keys Ranch Joshua Tree Fence	Contributing	Keys Ranch Joshua Tree Fence	05600	HS01FF
Keys Ranch Joshua Tree Sculpture	Contributing	Keys Ranch Joshua Tree Sculpture	58507	HS01HH
Keys Ranch One Stamp Mill	Contributing	Keys Ranch One Stamp Mill	274638	HS01QQ
Keys Ranch Salvage Yard and Materials	Contributing	N/A		
Keys Ranch Trailer Ruin	Contributing	N/A		
Keys Ranch, Wall Fragments (north)	Contributing	N/A		
Mill Ruin	Contributing	Keys Ranch Chilean Mill Ruin	56043	HS01MM

Stone Stock Watering Trough	Contributing	Barker Dam Stone Stock Watering Trough	09469	HS03E
Wooden Watering Trough	Contributing	Barker Dam Wooden Watering Trough	09467	HS03C
Rock piles (grave) in front of south school house	Non-Contributing			

Spatial Organization

The Keys Ranch historic district is located along the interface between the southwestern edge of the Wonderland of Rocks; a massive jumble of granitic landforms, and Hidden Valley; a broad, flat alluvial valley. The canyons that are created by this interface vary in height; often as high as a hundred feet. The Desert Queen Ranch, Cow Camp and the Barker Dam are all located within these canyons that extend out into Hidden Valley. The heads of these canyons are typically narrow but quickly broaden out into alluvial flats. The water impoundments on the ranch are located up in the canyons at points where gaps between the boulder walls were easily bridged to create water impoundments. At these points, the canyon floors jump in elevation due to the heights of the dams and have significant changes in vegetation behind them. The steep canyon walls also created natural boundaries for the cattle that were typically augmented by some type of fencing to keep the cattle penned in or out, depending upon the need.

The canyon and valley floors are crossed by intermittent streams that emerge from the Wonderland of Rocks. Trees and dense vegetation are located along some streams and springs that provide water throughout portions of the year. Adjacent to these seasonal streams, settlements were established, animals grazed and watered, and crops were grown.

Both roads and trails provided access for Keys and his family in, around and over the canyons which divided the Desert Queen Ranch, Cow Camp, the Barker Dam and the various mines Keys worked at. Access around the ranch could change depending on the season and whether the roads and washes were passable or not. The access road into the ranch also provided access to all of the ranch features as evidenced in the numerous roads and paths informally crossing the site. Unpaved roads in and around the Cow Camp and Barker Dam areas are evident but tend to be overgrown unless they are currently used as trails.

Within the Desert Queen Ranch, the ranch house was located below the dam at the base of some large boulders in a U-shaped valley that opens out towards Hidden Valley. The ranch house, gardens, orchard, ore operations, machine shop, corral and barn, and parts storage areas were all closely linked by roads to one another and enclosed by the steep boulder walls of the canyon.

At Cow Camp, the canyon quickly narrows from its wide, flat entrance through the camp area to the base of the dam (approximately 1/10th of a mile). The fencing, which is near the mouth of the canyon, is no longer standing although it is still visible on the ground. The dam structure is located where the canyon walls are in close proximity to one another. When full, the reservoir extends up this narrow canyon about a quarter mile.

Barker Dam had two canyon accesses to it; one from the south and the other from the west. The narrow canyon to the south was where the McHaney cabin was reportedly located and later became a corral and branding area for Keys. The west canyon is where the dam structure is located between a narrow gap in the canyon walls. The cattle water and feed troughs were located near the canyon before it quickly broadened out into Hidden Valley.

Because little activity in the area has occurred since Keys' death, the spatial organization of the ranch retains integrity as a contributing element to the Keys Ranch historic district.

Topography

The Keys Ranch historic district is in a part of the park referred to as the Wonderland of Rocks which forms the eastern boundary of Hidden Valley and the northern edge of Lost Horse Valley. The Desert Queen Ranch, Cow Camp and the Barker Dam are surrounded by steep hillsides which are created by huge rounded and angular granitic boulders. These outcroppings can extend several hundred feet in height and form natural enclosures for alluvial deposits. The reservoirs were located where narrow gaps in wash areas were easily dammed to create water impoundments for a variety of mining, ranching and agricultural uses.

The Desert Queen Ranch is located on a gradually sloping alluvial fan in Hidden Valley at an elevation about 4,150 feet. The hills immediately surrounding the ranch form a natural enclosure and are as high as 4,200 feet and continue up to 4,474 at a nearby peak. The entry to the ranch is on a gradual approach from the larger valley floor. Further northeast from the ranch, as the canyon begins to narrow, are the three dams that create the Keys Ranch reservoir.

Relatively slight grading modifications to the topography were made by the construction of various buildings, roads and other structures throughout the ranch. Excavation and ground leveling were typical for placement of mining equipment such as at the five-stamp mill and the Huntington mill. The family burial plot appears to be elevated to keep it above the adjacent dry wash and provide the flat area necessary for the placement of the graves.

Cow Camp is located in an alluvial wash area of Hidden Valley at about 4,160 feet. The dam is located at the narrow point of the canyon which extends up to 4,494 feet at a nearby peak. The flat areas between the canyon walls were used primarily for grazing and watering cattle with limited agricultural use.

Barker Dam is located in one of the southernmost canyons of Hidden Valley. The wall of the dam begins at about 4,230 feet and extends into the surrounding hills that are as high as 4,440 feet. The canyon to the south of the dam, which Keys apparently used for rounding up cattle, has become an unpaved parking area for visitors to the site. Although vegetation has been removed, the topography does not appear to have been significantly modified.

Minor modifications have been made at the Desert Queen Ranch since Keys' death to accommodate a trailer for on-site caretakers, a parking area for visitors and the construction of a comfort station. Slight modifications were also made at Barker Dam to accommodate a visitor parking area. Despite these minor modifications, the topography of the ranch has not been significantly disturbed since the historic period and therefore retains integrity.



Topography #1: Boulder outcroppings surrounding the Desert Queen Ranch, east. (Joshua Tree National Park archives, accession #693-116, n.d.)



Topography #2: Boulder outcroppings surrounding Cow Camp Dam, looking northeast. (PGSO, CLI negative #JOTR-N-0003-3, 1999)



Topography #3: Boulder outcroppings surrounding Barker Dam, looking west. (Joshua Tree National Park archives, accession #57, n.d.)

Characteristic Feature	Type Of Contribution	LCS Structure Name	IDLCS Number	Structure Number
Alluvial fans/Valley floor	Contributing			
Boulder Canyons	Contributing			
Dry Creek Washes	Contributing			

Vegetation

Water was essential for domestic use, for agriculture, for cattle and for mining activities on the ranch. Its use, availability and distribution was a primary organizational force behind the development of the vernacular landscape created by the ranching, mining and agricultural activities.

A variety of plants were used by Keys and his family for ranching, farming, and household uses. These are documented in historic photographs of the ranch, in Willis Keys' book about growing up on the ranch and in interviews with local residents who spent time with the Keys family.

It is important to understand that the vegetation on the ranch changed throughout Keys' life depending on his needs at any one time. The amount of cattle he was grazing, the amount of food he was raising and other uses of the land were determined by a variety of factors. Accordingly, there is no one picture of vegetation on the ranch that can be provided. Even the decline of the orchard and other garden areas around the ranch were already well underway during the last years of Keys' life on the ranch.

RANCHING

The first attempts at cattle raising in this part of the Mojave desert took place in the early 1860s when stockmen grazed large numbers of cattle in the open range of the desert in the winter and along the river or wash bottoms in the summer. The Joshua tree forests and creosote scrub communities typical of the high desert had reliable grazing since galletta grass and saltbush provided good browsing material for the cattle in the winter and spring. This, combined with access to drinking water, provided two essential elements for sustaining livestock in the desert.

Most of the cattle grazing was open range. However, if cattle were corralled or fences constructed, local materials were typically used as available. Since construction materials were difficult to come by, the trees in the area (pinyon pine, cottonwood, desert scrub oak, willow and Joshua tree) were typically used for gate and fence posts. Use of willow for posts is specifically documented in Willis Keys' account of growing up at the Desert Queen Ranch. The corral at the Desert Queen Ranch is made up of Joshua trees that Keys stacked on their sides.

To supplement the natural forage, Keys raised crops like corn and alfalfa to support cattle and other farm animals. Non-native grasses and other forage species were also introduced with the cattle and still persist today, typically in areas of soil disturbance.

AGRICULTURE

Agriculture was extremely difficult in the thin desert soil. To successfully raise crops, the soil in the orchard and vegetable gardens had to be amended. This was accomplished by "hauling in dirt and stuff out of the lake bed to build it up". (Keys and Kidwell, 1997:25). Dynamite and augers were used to loosen the soil and create holes large enough for the trees in the orchard to successfully grow. Supplemental applications of silt from the lake provided the necessary nutrients and organic materials to keep both the trees and vegetable gardens healthy.

Numerous crops were planted for daily consumption in and around the ranch. Grain crops included barley, wheat, field corn and rye. A photo of Key's harvesting rye at Cow Camp proves that he raised crops not just at the ranch but in other areas such as Cow Camp. Grain crops included barley, wheat, field corn and rye. Vegetables included beans, sweet corn, cucumbers, squash/pumpkins, radishes, tomatoes, and melons (watermelons, cantaloupes, casaba and honey dew). (Keys and Kidwell, 1997: 25-29).

One of the vegetable gardens was immediately south and adjacent to the ranch house. This area is slightly higher than the orchard, probably due to the increased fertilization and soil amendment that was added for the crops. In some photos, the vegetable garden appears to have been surrounded by a wire fence that was separate, although adjacent to, the orchard. Above ground irrigation lines appear to have also separated these two areas. The vegetable garden and orchard appear to have been irrigated with water from the dam and the nearby windmill and well. No remnants of these annual crops survive today except for the furrowing which is still visible in several areas of the ranch.

Keys used other locations for agricultural purposes when additional soil, fertilizer and water could be transported to the site. Historic photos indicate that crops were raised on the eastside of the creek bed between the ranch and the north dam. Grains and possibly alfalfa were raised in a fenced-in area near the five-stamp mill according to Willis Keys. Furrows still exist where crops were reportedly raised in the 1960s in a flat area adjacent to the five-stamp mill.

According to one visitor to the Keys Ranch, areas near, but not adjacent to the ranch were also farmed. One of these areas may have been near the ranch boundary fence and is supposedly visible from the ranch by the slight difference in the color and age of vegetation in that area (Jackson, 1999, interview). However, this could not be verified at the time of the field investigation.

The orchard, which was immediately east and south of the ranch house, included varieties of apples, crabapples, pears, peaches, apricots, plums and almonds. The size of this area was increased when Keys built a rock retaining wall along the dry wash to prevent erosion. This wall allowed Keys to expand both the orchard and vegetable garden areas. Numerous photos exist of the Keys family and visitors in both the vegetable garden and orchard. Although the ranch was abandoned after 1969, three remnant pear trees still survive today.

HOUSEHOLD USE

Joan Jackson, a childhood visitor to the ranch, remembered a wide variety of uses that plants were put to by Mrs. Keys, including their use as herbs, basic medicines, toys, bouquets, potpourri, and as natural insect repellants (Jackson, personal communication, 1999). Ms Jackson states, "Mrs. Keys would explain the unkempt appearance of her garden quite simply, "The first priority of a desert family was survival and especially to get through summer and winter, therefore most of the year was devoted to accomplishing this." (The Sun Runner, 1999, pg. 21). However, even under these austere conditions, the culinary herbs and medicinal plants grown around the house would have likely provided some sense of a garden because of their color and fragrance. No photos specifically documenting this portion of the garden or verifying the use of these specific plants has been located in the park archives.

According to Ms Jackson, the plants in Mrs. Keys' garden included:

Black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*)
Sage (*Salvia officinalis*)
Spearmint (*Mentha spicata*)
White Mustard (*Sinapis alba*)
Lemon Balm (*Melissa officinalis*)
Queen Anne's Lace (*Daucus carota*)
Feverfew (*Chrysanthemum parthenium*)
Tansy (*Tanacetum vulgare*)
Hollyhock (*Althea rosea*)
Comfrey (*Symphytum officinale*)

Milkweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*)

In a site visit, Ms. Jackson recalled that beehives were located near the guest cottage and would have helped pollinate the variety of crops planted (Jackson, personal communication, 1999). These are also referenced in Willis Keys' accounts of life on the ranch.

Both Willis Keys and Joan Jackson recounted the use of dried Joshua tree wood for firewood. Willis Keys recounted that their family used Joshua trees for fuel when they ran out of coal for their blacksmith operation. Ms Jackson remembered that Mrs. Keys preferred Joshua tree firewood in her stove because it burned evenly and cleanly (Jackson, 1999, interview). Joshua tree logs are still visible in the woodpiles left on the ranch.

Trees, both native and planted were used for shaded picnic and gathering areas. Willis Keys remembers using a large almond tree as a shady picnic area (Keys and Kidwell, 1997: 25). Historic photos also indicate the presence of a large pinyon pine adjacent to the house where picnic tables were arranged as an outside gathering and eating area; its stump still marks the spot. Three Arizona cypress were planted along the east side of the house. Two of the three still today.

Poplar and native cottonwood trees were planted along the creek to stabilize the banks which were subject to erratic flooding. Although these trees seemed to come and go depending upon William F. Keys' shifting opinion of their usefulness, their presence is well documented and provided an aesthetic backdrop in numerous photos. In the 1930s, a grape arbor was constructed over the walkway that lead to the house. Keys supposedly used cottonwood/poplar trees that he had recently cut down from the nearby creek as lumber which could account for an apparently short life span (Jackson, personal communication, 1999).

One of the few remnant plants that still exist today is the giant reed (*Arundo donax*) which was planted adjacent to the well where it thrived because of frequent watering. Historic photos show large stands of it while Keys occupied the ranch. The reed likely provided a variety of functions including Willis Keys' accounts of using it as a fishing pole at the nearby dam. It is referred to as bamboo by local residents apparently because of the similarity of its appearance. The giant reed is a native to Europe but has naturalized in parts of southern California including several locations within the park (JOTR Natural Resource staff).

CHANGES TO THE VEGETATION SINCE THE PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE

Before his death in 1969, the cattle, farming and mining activities had declined on the ranch. When management of the property shifted to the National Park Service, maintenance of the ranch landscape stopped and natural processes began to take over again. However, a few remnant stands of vegetation planted by Keys and his family still survive today; a testament to their tenacity in the harsh desert environment.

Immediately adjacent to the house, two of the original three Arizona cypress still survive and appear in fair condition. A small patch of giant reed still grows near the well and appears to be reestablishing itself because site caretakers have resumed watering it. Several poplar and cottonwood trees along the bank of the dry wash that are attributable to Keys still survive, however, the poplars appear to be in decline, probably because of their age and the harsh desert environment.

Three pear trees in the orchard survive today. Several of the dead ones have been recently replaced by park staff. Two of these replanted trees are in what historically would have been the vegetable garden. It

is not clear whether the rest of the recent orchard plantings replicate either the spacing or specific species that Keys originally planted in the orchard.

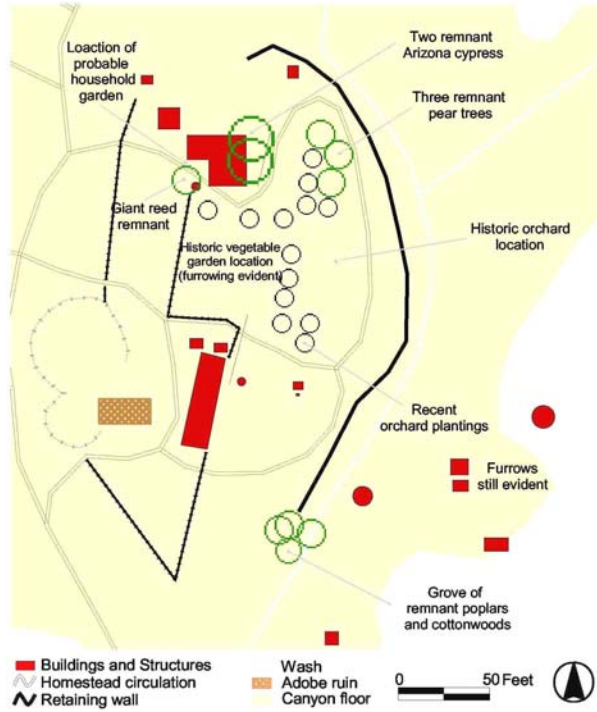
None of the annual crop plants that Keys planted at the Desert Queen Ranch remain. However, evidence of furrowing still exists in several areas including the vegetable garden adjacent to the ranch house and near the five-stamp mill. Portions of the vegetable garden and orchard that were adjacent to the ranch house are kept clear by site caretakers. Although the desert vegetation has moved back into the outlying agricultural plots, it may be possible to locate some of these from the lack of mature vegetation and the presence of plant species that grow in recently disturbed soils.

No remnants of any crops or other plantings are evident at either Cow Camp or the Barker Dam. However, large patches of non-native annual grasses are still growing in previously disturbed agricultural areas at Cow Camp.

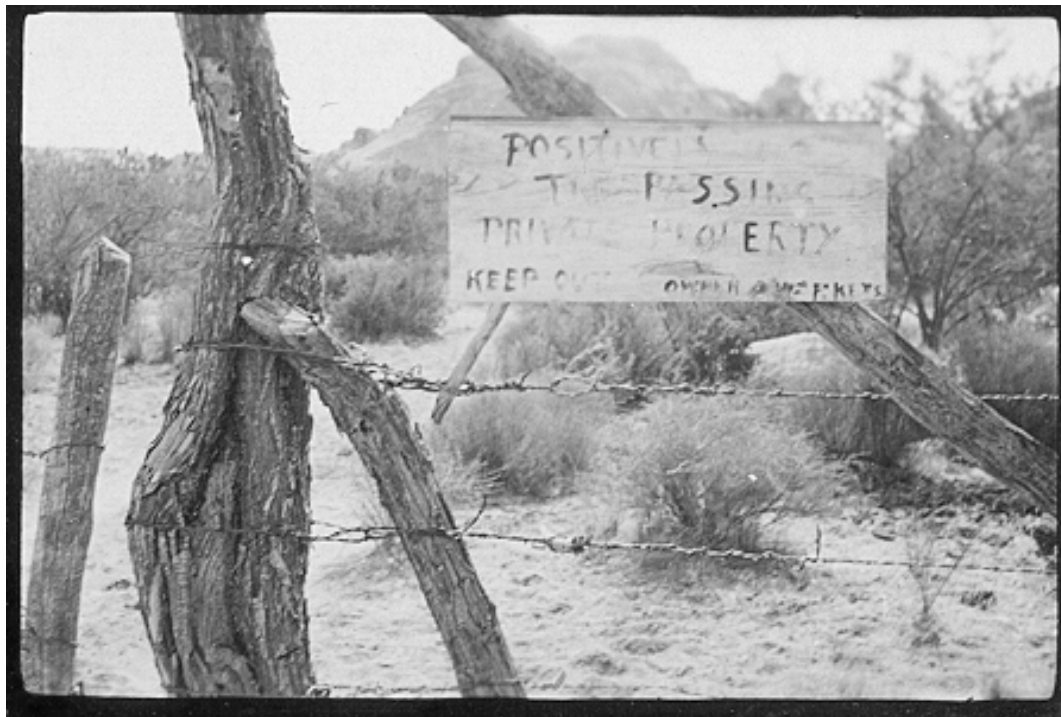
Because most of the flat alluvial areas within the three component landscapes were used as open range land for grazing, the native vegetation that supported the cattle still remain. Non-native grasses/plants were introduced through grazing practices and persist in areas that supported cattle grazing. These areas are not considered to be pure stands of native vegetation by park staff because of the influence of the cattle grazing in these areas. It is still unclear to what extent the native ecosystem was impacted by grazing and further research may be needed to determine this.

The park has recently begun protection and rehabilitation of some of the remnant vegetation planted by Keys around the Desert Queen Ranch. Portions of the orchard have been replanted although it is unclear if the species or locations are historically accurate.

In the overall context of a ranching landscape, the vegetation that supported the ranching operation retains integrity. However, individual features of the ranch landscape, such as the orchard, are in poor condition. The vegetable gardens are no longer maintained as gardens but some are kept clear of weeds and native vegetation to demonstrate how Keys used the land.



Vegetation #1: Existing conditions. (PGSO, CLI, ArcView file, 1999)



Vegetation #2-Ranching: Historic photo of fence posts made with local materials, view unknown. (Joshua Tree National Park archives, accession #356, Pine City, 1945)



Vegetation #3-Ranching: Many of the fences and corrals around the ranch corral were made with Joshua Trees, looking northeast. (Joshua Tree National Park archives, accession #531-I20, 1964)



Vegetation #4-Agriculture: Early historic photo of Keys Ranch and orchard, looking west. (Joshua Tree National Park archives, accession #531-I03, ca.1917)



Vegetation #5-Agriculture: Desert Queen Ranch showing garden and orchard areas, looking north. (Joshua Tree National Park archives, accession #531-113, n.d.)



Vegetation #6-Agriculture: The Keys would share their produce with friends, looking northwest. Photo of Ed Braeden harvesting watermelons. (Joshua Tree National Park archives, accession #531-12635, 1966)



Vegetation #7-Agriculture: Bill Keys in his orchard, looking south. (Joshua Tree National Park archives, accession #531-125, n.d.)



Vegetation #8-Agriculture: Aerial view of garden and orchard. (Joshua Tree National Park archives, WASO #72-439-7, 1972)



Vegetation #9-Agriculture: Crop furrows still extant, looking east. (PGSO, CLI slide #JOTR-S-0001-24, 1999)



Vegetation #10-Agriculture: Three pear trees and two Arizona cypress remain at the ranch house today, looking west. (PGSO, CLI slide #JOTR-S-0003-2, 1999)



Vegetation #11-Household Use: Grape arbor made from poplar trees. Note orchard and other landscape features, looking east. (Joshua Tree National Park archives, accession #531-113, n.d.)



Vegetation #12-Household Use: Historic photo of vegetable garden looking south with five stamp mill in background, looking south. (Joshua Tree National Park archives, accession #2684, ca. 1939)



Vegetation #13-Household Use: Creosote bush now grows in the bed reportedly used by Mrs. Keys to grow many of her household plants, looking northeast. (PGSO, CLI slide #JOTR-S-0004-2, 1999)

Characteristic Feature	Type Of Contribution	LCS Structure Name	IDLCS Number	Structure Number
Arizona Cypress (2)	Contributing			
Cottonwood/Poplar Grove	Contributing			
Creosote Scrub	Contributing			
Fruit Trees Replanted by NPS in Historic Orchard	Contributing			
Giant Reed	Contributing			
Joshua Tree Woodland	Contributing			
Oak/Scrub Thickets	Contributing			
Orchard Remnants (3)	Contributing			
Riparian Corridors	Contributing			

Fruit Trees Replanted Outside of Non-Contributing
the Historic Orchard (2)

Views And Vistas

The developed areas of the Keys Ranch historic district are located on alluvial fans and washes emerging from the boulders and cliffs created by the Wonderland of Rocks. Access into these areas was along the valley floor and through the washes leading into these canyons. With the exception of the wooded riparian areas, the native vegetation is typically low and provides for unobstructed views of the surrounding hills and mountains. Open views bounded by geologic formations are therefore characteristic of Hidden Valley and the washes leading into it.

The developed areas within the ranch are surrounded by the bare rock and boulders that create the steep walls of the washes leading into Hidden Valley. Within this context, Keys took advantage of the open nature of the desert landscape but does not appear to have designed anything with a specific view or vista in mind. Location of specific ranch features was based on practical rather than aesthetic considerations. However, much of the historic documentation of the ranch exists because of the outstanding views provided from the canyon walls. The panoramic shots taken from various high points on the cliffs that surround the ranch provide an important record of the continuum of development that has occurred over time at the Desert Queen Ranch.

At Cow Camp, shrubs and other dense vegetation are beginning to fill in what would have been a more open setting when the area was subject to frequent grazing. At present, the abandoned well, walls along the canyon edge, and fencing are being increasingly obscured by dense scrub vegetation. However, the views into the hills and boulder fields surrounding the flat areas are still unobstructed.

The flat areas where cattle grazed around the Barker Dam are still open with views into the surrounding hillsides and up towards the dam. The area of the dam itself is still surrounded by walls, cliffs and boulders typical of the Wonderland of Rocks.

For the district as a whole, the open views and vistas provided by the low, open desert vegetation retain integrity to that which existed during the period of significance.

No specific features have been identified.



Views and Vistas #1: Matching historic panoramic view of the ranch from adjacent clifftop looking west. See Supplemental Information for large scale image. (Joshua Tree National Park archives, accession #531-106, ca. 1917)



View and Vistas #2: Contemporary view of the Ranch from adjacent clifftop-contemporary counterpart to match above landscape, looking west. See Supplemental Information for large scale image. (PGSO, CLI negative #JOTR-N-0001-2 through 6, 1999)

Management Information

Descriptive And Geographic Information

Historic Name(s):	(Bill) McHaney Ranch Desert Queen Ranch
Current Name(s):	Keys Desert Queen Ranch
Management Unit:	
Tract Numbers:	
State and County:	San Bernardino County, CA
State and County:	Riverside County, CA
Size (acres):	1,037.92

Boundary UTM

Boundary UTM(s):	Source	Type	Datum	Zone	Easting	Northing
	USGS Map 1:24,000	Area	NAD 27	11	577336	3766189
	USGS Map 1:24,000	Area	NAD 27	11	577200	3766362
	USGS Map 1:24,000	Area	NAD 27	11	577625	3766694
	USGS Map 1:24,000	Area	NAD 27	11	577755	3766526

GIS File Name:

GIS File Description:

National Register Information

National Register Documentation: Entered -- Inadequately Documented

Explanatory Narrative:

The inventory area contains three National Register properties in addition to both federal lands that were owned or controlled by William F. Keys and the Keys family cemetery. One of these properties, the Keys homestead, has many different names both historically and today. For the purposes of this inventory, the homestead area will be referred to as the Desert Queen Ranch. (The National Register nomination has three historic names listed: Keys' Ranch, Desert Queen Ranch, and (Bill) McHaney Ranch. It was entered on the Register as Keys' Desert Queen Ranch)

The Desert Queen Ranch, Cow Camp, and Barker Dam were entered into the National Register in 1975 as a district, a district, and a structure respectively. At that time, the nomination did not address the three areas as a ranch complex or district. Although landscape associated features are often noted, each nomination should be amended to include further discussion of the individual landscape features and their context within the larger ranch landscape.

The boundary established in this inventory and called the Keys Ranch historic district is not a National Register boundary. However, the information provided in this inventory should be used to amend to the National Register nominations for the Desert Queen Ranch, Cow Camp and the Barker Dam landscapes. A more inclusive view of the ranching operation would be given by consolidating these two National Register districts and structure into one ranching district.

When plotted, the UTM coordinates in the Register nomination for Cow Camp were found to be inaccurate. The district boundary plotted out nearby, but not at Cow Camp itself. This inventory uses corrected boundaries that contains all of the features listed within the nomination form including the dam, reservoir, associated structures, grazing area and entry road. An amendment to the Cow Camp nomination should be made to include these changes.

The boundary coordinates listed in the Register nomination for Cow Camp are:

11 577200,3766700
11 577300,3766500
11 576570,3766150
11 576470,3766350

The revised boundary coordinates used in the CLI inventory are:

11 577626,3766695
11 577756,3766525
11 577337,3766187
11 577201,3766364

NRIS Information:

NRIS Number: 75000228
Primary Certification: Listed In The National Register
Primary Certification Date: 10/29/1975
Name In National Register: Cow Camp

NRIS Number: 75000174
Primary Certification: Listed In The National Register
Primary Certification Date: 10/30/1975
Name In National Register: Keys Desert Queen Ranch
Other Names In
National Register: McHaney Ranch;Bill Key's Ranch

NRIS Number: 75000173
Primary Certification: Listed In The National Register
Primary Certification Date: 10/29/1975
Name In National Register: Barker Dam

National Register Eligibility: Eligible -- SHPO Consensus Determination

Explanatory Narrative:

The California SHPO concurred with the findings of this CLI (08/24/2004), particularly: that the

proposed district is eligible for listing on the National Register, that the setting contributes to the significance, and that the list of contributing/non-contributing features is correct.

Date of Eligibility Determination: 8/24/2004

National Register Classification: District

Significance Level: Local

Contributing/Individual: Individual

Significance Criteria: A -- Inventory Unit is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history
B -- Inventory Unit is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past

Period Of Significance

Time Period: 1894 - 1969 AD

Historic Context Theme: Developing the American Economy
Historic Context Subtheme: The Mining Frontier
Historic Context Facet: Great Basin: Nevada, Utah And Eastern California

Historic Context Theme: Developing the American Economy
Historic Context Subtheme: The Cattle Frontier
Historic Context Facet: Ranches

Area Of Significance:

Category: Agriculture
Priority: 1

Category: Industry
Priority: 2

National Historic Landmark Information

**National Historic
Landmark Status:** No

World Heritage Site Information

World Heritage Site Status: No

Cultural Landscape Type and Use

Cultural Landscape Type: Historic Vernacular Landscape

Current and Historic Use/Function:

Use/Function Category:	Funerary
Use/Function:	Cemetery
Detailed Use/Function:	Cemetery
Type Of Use/Function:	Both Current And Historic
Use/Function Category:	Industrial/Processing/Extraction
Use/Function:	Dam
Detailed Use/Function:	Dam - Concrete (Gravity)
Type Of Use/Function:	Both Current And Historic
Use/Function Category:	Education
Use/Function:	Interpretive Landscape
Detailed Use/Function:	Interpretive Landscape
Type Of Use/Function:	Current
Use/Function Category:	Agriculture/Subsistence
Use/Function:	Livestock
Detailed Use/Function:	Livestock
Type Of Use/Function:	Historic
Use/Function Category:	Industrial/Processing/Extraction
Use/Function:	Processing Site
Detailed Use/Function:	Processing Site
Type Of Use/Function:	Historic
Use/Function Category:	Domestic (Residential)
Use/Function:	Single Family Dwelling
Detailed Use/Function:	Single Family House
Type Of Use/Function:	Historic

Ethnographic Information

Ethnographic Survey Conducted: No Survey Conducted

Adjacent Lands Information

Do Adjacent Lands Contribute? No

Adjacent Lands Description:

General Management Information

Management Category: Should Be Preserved And Maintained

Management Category Date: 11/4/1999

Explanatory Narrative:

Three criteria must be met to manage an inventory unit in "Category B: Should be Preserved and Maintained".

Criterion: The Inventory Unit Meets National Register Criteria.

The Keys Ranch historic district contains three National Register properties: the Desert Queen Ranch, Cow Camp and the Barker Dam. All three sites are currently entered on the National Register of Historic Places (1975) under Criteria A and B.

Criterion: The Inventory Unit Is Compatible With The Park's Legislated Significance.

Joshua Tree National Monument was established as a unit of the national park system by Presidential Proclamation No 2193 on August 10, 1936 (50 Stat. 1760). The ranch district is compatible with the park's legislated significance which states, "Whereas certain public lands in the State of California contain historic and prehistoric structures, and have situated thereon various objects of historic and scientific interest... it appears that it would be in the public interest to reserve such lands as a national monument, to be known as the Joshua Tree National Monument." Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

Criterion: The Inventory Unity Has A Continuing Or Potential Purpose That Is Appropriate To Its Traditional Use Or Function.

The GMP includes as purposes of the park:

"Protect and interpret areas, sites, structures, and various artifacts associated with occupations by prehistoric, historic, and contemporary Native American groups, historic miners, and subsistence cattle ranchers."

"Provide visitors with opportunities to experience and enjoy natural and cultural resources through compatible recreational activities."

Maintenance Location Code: KR

Condition Assessment And Impacts

The criteria for determining the condition of landscapes is consistent with the Resource Management Plan Guideline definitions (1994) and is decided with the concurrence of park management. Cultural landscape conditions are defined as follows:

Good: indicates the landscape shows no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The landscape's cultural and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.

Fair: indicates the landscape shows clear evidence of minor disturbances and deterioration by natural and/or human forces, and some degree of corrective action is needed within 3-5 years to prevent further harm to its cultural and/or natural values. If left to continue without the appropriate corrective action, the cumulative effect of the deterioration of many of the character-defining elements will cause the landscape to degrade to a poor condition.

Poor: indicates the landscape shows clear evidence of major disturbance and rapid deterioration by natural and/or human forces. Immediate corrective action is required to protect and preserve the remaining historical and natural values.

Undetermined: Not enough information available to make an evaluation.

Condition Assessment: Fair
Assessment Date: 09/30/1998
Date Recorded: 09/30/1998
Park Management Concurrence: Yes **Concurrence Date:** 11/4/1999
Level Of Impact Severity: Severe

Stabilization Measures:

Impact:

Type of Impact: Impending Development

Internal/External: Internal

Description:

The proposed road improvement and parking lot project slated for the Barker Dam will effect the rural character of the landscape, realign a historic road trace, and increase use levels, all of which could impact historic resources around Barker Dam. Proposed construction work should minimize impacts to cultural resources. The park should consider the feasibility of additional interpretation, ranger presence and other resource protection measures to mitigate the impacts of increased visitation on the resources.

Type of Impact: Inappropriate Maintenance

Internal/External: Internal

Description:

Since Keys' death, the park service has reportedly moved a number of objects, vehicles,

and small structures from their original locations on the ranch. If true, this compromises the integrity and the interpretive potential of the site by changing the configuration of the ranch from that which existed during the period of significance. No additional relocations should be made without proper documentation and compliance. Objects that have been moved from their original locations subsequent to Keys' death should be returned to those original locations (or close proximity) if enough information exists to make an informed determination.

Type of Impact: Operations On Site

Internal/External: Internal

Description:

The visitor staging area at the Desert Queen Ranch, including the visitor parking area, restrooms, maintenance shed, VIP trailer, and "gravesite", are not part of the Keys ranch complex and constitute intrusions to the historic landscape. Consideration should be given to phasing as many of these services/activities out of the historic district as is feasible. One option would be to relocate the staging functions at the site near the Desert Queen Ranch property boundary fence where groups currently have to wait until the ranch gate is opened by a ranger.

The current visitor staging area alters the sequence by which visitors would have experienced the ranch historically. The original experience or sense of arrival at the Desert Queen Ranch could easily be restored through relocation of the staging area.

The "gravesite" at the staging area should be removed since it appears to be a creation of a former VIP. It is a non-contributing element that blurs the distinctions between historic and non-historic elements for the visitor.

Relocation of the parking area at the Barker Dam is currently planned as part of a visitor facility improvement program. Consideration should be given to removing any non-contributing features associated with the existing parking area.

Type of Impact: Planting Practices

Internal/External: Internal

Description:

Although in a state of decline at Key's death, the orchards and garden remnants should continue to be watered and maintained to promote their longevity. An arborist should be consulted to review current maintenance practices and ensure protection of the remaining trees and plants.

The park should immediately begin a budding or grafting program for the three remnant pears to ensure continuation of the remaining historic orchard stock. Replanting of any fruit trees in the future should include plantings of the historic pear tree stock. Records should be searched and oral interviews of Keys descendants made to see if the specific types of fruit trees that Keys had can be determined (e.g. what type of apples).

Replacement with non-historic fruit tree species should be avoided if at all possible. Grafts or budding from any historic stock at other homesteads in the vicinity could also be explored if it was thought that those trees had also been grown on the Desert Queen Ranch.

The existing orchard plan should be reviewed to ensure that it preserves and protects the integrity of the orchard as a cultural resource. Several new trees appear to have been planted outside the area of the original orchard in what had been the vegetable garden. These trees should be moved to sites that would more accurately represent the layout of the historic orchard. In the future, any additional restoration/rehabilitation efforts should comply with the Secretary of Interiors Standards under an identified management treatment strategy.

No attempt at restoring the vegetable or household gardens should be made until a Cultural Landscape Report is completed. The CLR would provide treatment and management guidelines for all of the orchard and garden areas around the ranch complex

The caretakers at the site perform the important function of ensuring that the site is maintained and damage to the resources minimized. Because these volunteers are not permanent, the park should carefully review with them appropriate maintenance and preservation activities. Irrigation pipes, furrows, and existing vegetation should be preserved in place and documented before any changes to these features are implemented.

Type of Impact: Release To Succession

Internal/External: Internal

Description:

Some of the agricultural and household garden areas at the Desert Queen Ranch have been reclaimed by native vegetation. A Cultural Landscape Report would provide treatment recommendations for these areas with appropriate guidelines for minimizing any loss that threatens the setting and feeling of the ranch.

Type of Impact: Structural Deterioration

Internal/External: Internal

Description:

Although the dry climate in Joshua Tree National Park significantly reduces the metallic and wooden deterioration mechanisms commonly associated with abandoned structures, those still standing are in danger of decay. Doors are left open exposing interiors to the elements and wildlife, and solar degradation is damaging all exposed structural elements. Current efforts to repair and seal these structures should become part of a cyclic maintenance program.

Two documents raise concerns about the structural integrity of the dams in the study area. (Maintenance Assistance Report: Inspection of Dams, Joshua Tree National Monument, California, Richard Ohmstede, structural engineer, NPS, DSC, April 1980, and Downstream Hazard Classification, Lower, Middle, and Upper Keys Ranch Dams, Joshua Tree National Monument, California, no author, NPS, June 12, 1992). The structural and safety concerns raised in these reports should be addressed to ensure the safety and protection of both the resources and visitors.

Type of Impact: Vandalism/Theft/Arson
Internal/External: Both Internal and External

Description:

Unsupervised visitation at the Desert Queen Ranch, Cow Camp and Barker Dam has the potential to impact important features within these landscapes either through vandalism or theft and includes the loss of collections material and damage to prehistoric artifacts. Campers at the Hidden Valley campground often hike along backcountry trails to get to the Desert Queen Ranch. Because these visits are often made when there is no site supervision, the visitors can create both safety and security issues at the ranch. The caretaker's presence, interpretative materials and visible resource protection presence are critical to ensure protection of these resources.

Type of Impact: Visitation
Internal/External: Internal

Description:

Along the entrance road at the ranch, tour groups are shown prehistoric rock slicks (grinding pits). Grinding stones (manos) are used for demonstrating how Native Americans ground food. Use of the grinding stones on the slicks can damage these prehistoric features. Accordingly, the site should continue to be interpreted, but not physically used in order to preserve what remains of the rock slicks.

Visitors should be kept from walking on agricultural plots where furrowing is still present until appropriate treatment guidelines are developed for these areas. Furrowing, and other evidence of crops, can provide important information about how Keys farmed these areas. Furrowed areas in the vegetable garden and near the five-stamp mill are two of the more obvious areas still evident.

Agreements, Legal Interest, and Access

Management Agreement: None

Explanatory Narrative:

NPS Legal Interest: Fee Simple

Explanatory Narrative:

Public Access: Other Restrictions

Treatment

Approved Treatment: Preservation
Approved Treatment Document: Other Document
Document Date: February 1, 1994

Explanatory Narrative:

The 1994 GMP/DCP/EIS compilation states "The 1993 Joshua Tree National Monument Resources Management Plan outlines the programs necessary to address resource management issues and provide long-term protection of both cultural and natural resources. Management of natural and cultural resources will be guided by the recommendations in the resources management plan, which is reviewed annually." (p. 13) Consequently, the 1999 Resources Management Plan includes very limited funding for historic structure stabilization at Keys Desert Queen Ranch (JOTR-C-05, JOTR-C-08).

In addition, Michael Scott (Historical Architect, PGSO) is currently producing preservation recommendations for Keys Desert Queen Ranch.

Approved Treatment Completed: No

Approved Treatment Cost

LCS Structure Approved

Treatment Cost: \$0

**Landscape Approved
Treatment Cost:** \$0

Cost Date:

Level of Estimate:

Cost Estimator:

Explanatory Description: The LCS has not identified ultimate approved treatment costs for the buildings and structures and no landscape treatment costs have been identified in a park document.

Stabilization Costs

LCS Structure Stabilization Cost: \$0
Landscape Stabilization Costs: \$48,000
Cost Date: September 30, 2003
Level Of Estimate: C - Similar Facilities

Cost Estimator:

Support Office

Explanatory Description:

PMIS Project #4707 titled "Preserve Keys Ranch Structures And Historic Landscape" outlines numerous structural and small scale feature stabilization projects amounting to the above figure.

Documentation Assessment and Checklist

Documentation Assessment: Fair

Documentation:

Document: General Management Plan

Year Of Document: 1994

Adequate Documentation: No

Explanatory Narrative:

This document refers to the Resources Management Plan for issues concerning the Desert Queen Ranch, Cow Camp, and Barker Dam.

Document: Historic Resource Study

Year Of Document: 1983

Amplifying Details: Written by Linda W. Greene

Adequate Documentation: Yes

Explanatory Narrative:

This report provides a thorough history of land use in the park and pays particular attention to and specifically addresses the history and use of Desert Queen Ranch, Cow Camp, and Barker Dam.

Document: Other

Year Of Document: 1975

Amplifying Details: "Key's Desert Queen Ranch, Joshua Tree National Monument, Preservation Study"

Adequate Documentation: No

Explanatory Narrative:

The report provides a history of the site, with a detailed site map for the period. However, there are no descriptions of the landscape and land use around the structures.

Document: Resource Management Plan

Year Of Document: 1999

Adequate Documentation: No

Explanatory Narrative:

The Resource Management Plan includes project statements for the Desert Queen Ranch, but does not include the Barker Dam or Cow Camp.

Appendix

Bibliography

Citations:

Citation Author: Wallace, William J
Citation Title: An Archaeological Reconnaissance in Joshua Tree National Monument
Year of Publication: 1964
Source Name: CRBIB
Citation Number: 016138
Citation Type: Narrative
Citation Location: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Citation Author: O'Neil, Dennis H
Citation Title: An Archaeological Reconnaissance of the Barker Dam Region, Joshua Tree National Monument, California
Year of Publication: 1968
Source Name: CRBIB
Citation Number: 003801
Citation Type: Both Graphic And Narrative
Citation Location: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Citation Author: Hickman, Patricia Parker
Citation Title: Country Nodes: An Anthropological Evaluation of William Keys' Desert Queen Ranch, Joshua Tree National Monument, California
Year of Publication: 1977
Source Name: CRBIB
Citation Number: 011556
Citation Type: Both Graphic And Narrative
Citation Location: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Citation Title: Cultural Resources Management Plan, Joshua Tree National Monument
Year of Publication: 0
Source Name: CRBIB
Citation Number: 013021
Citation Type: Both Graphic And Narrative
Citation Location: PGSO Library

Citation Author: King, Thomas J
Citation Title: Fifty Years of Archeology in the California Desert: An Archeological Overview of Joshua Tree National Monument
Year of Publication: 1975
Source Name: CRBIB
Citation Number: 011396
Citation Type: Both Graphic And Narrative
Citation Location: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Citation Author: Greene, Linda W
Citation Title: Historic Resource Study: A History of Land Use in Joshua Tree National Monument
Year of Publication: 1983
Source Name: CRBIB
Citation Number: 011958
Citation Type: Both Graphic And Narrative
Citation Location: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Citation Author: Chappell, Gordon//Cox, Robert//Kelly, Roger
Citation Title: Keys' Desert Queen Ranch, Joshua Tree National Monument, Preservation Study
Year of Publication: 1975
Source Name: CRBIB
Citation Number: 011555
Citation Type: Both Graphic And Narrative
Citation Location: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Citation Author: Parker, Patricia
Citation Title: One Hundred Years of History in the California Desert:
An Overview of Historic Archeological Resources at
Joshua Tree National Monument
Year of Publication: 1980
Source Name: CRBIB
Citation Number: 011553
Citation Type: Both Graphic And Narrative
Citation Location: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service

Citation Title: Desert Queen (Keyes) Ranch
Year of Publication: 1994
Source Name: HABS
Citation Number: CA-2347
Citation Type: Both Graphic And Narrative
Citation Location: PGSO Library

Citation Title: Desert Queen Ranch, Guest House
Year of Publication: 1994
Source Name: HABS
Citation Number: CA-2347-C
Citation Type: Both Graphic And Narrative
Citation Location: PGSO Library

Citation Title: Desert Queen Ranch, Keyes Ranch House
Year of Publication: 1994
Source Name: HABS
Citation Number: CA-2347-A
Citation Type: Both Graphic And Narrative
Citation Location: PGSO Library

Citation Title: Desert Queen Ranch, Machine Shop
Year of Publication: 1994
Source Name: HABS
Citation Number: CA-2347-H
Citation Type: Both Graphic And Narrative
Citation Location: PGSO Library

Citation Title: Desert Queen Ranch, North House (Teacher's house)
(Lake Cabin)
Year of Publication: 1994
Source Name: HABS
Citation Number: CA-2347-E
Citation Type: Both Graphic And Narrative
Citation Location: PGSO Library

Citation Title: Desert Queen Ranch, School House
Year of Publication: 1994
Source Name: HABS
Citation Number: CA-2347-D
Citation Type: Both Graphic And Narrative
Citation Location: PGSO Library

Citation Title: Desert Queen Ranch, South House (school house)
Year of Publication: 1994
Source Name: HABS
Citation Number: CA-2347-G
Citation Type: Both Graphic And Narrative
Citation Location: PGSO Library

Citation Title: Desert Queen Ranch, Store House
Year of Publication: 1994
Source Name: HABS
Citation Number: CA-2347-B
Citation Type: Both Graphic And Narrative
Citation Location: PGSO Library

Citation Title: Desert Queen Ranch, Tack House
Year of Publication: 1994
Source Name: HABS
Citation Number: CA-2347-F
Citation Type: Both Graphic And Narrative
Citation Location: PGSO Library

Citation Title: Interview and tour with Joan Jackson
Source Name: Interview
Citation Type: Narrative
Citation Location: none

Citation Author: Schneider, Joan
Citation Title: Keys Ranch Road Profile, field notebook
Source Name: Joan Schneider
Citation Type: Both Graphic And Narrative
Citation Location: PGSO, CLI archives

Citation Author: Jackson, Joan
Citation Title: The Sun Runner Magazine, Vo. 5, No. 5, "Francis Keys Medicinal Herb Garden"
Year of Publication: 1999
Source Name: Joshua Tree National Monument archives
Citation Type: Both Graphic And Narrative
Citation Location: Joshua Tree National Monument archives

Citation Title: Digital Ortho Photo Quad, indianco_se.bil and associated GIS files

Source Name: Joshua Tree National Park GIS team

Citation Location: Joshua Tree National Park

Citation Author: Schneider, Joan S.

Citation Title: Joshua Tree National Monument Inventory

Year of Publication: 1991

Source Name: JOTR

Citation Type: Narrative

Citation Author: Kuffer, Dana, Tom MaGee, and Jan Keswick

Citation Title: Keys Ranch Structural Stabilization, FY99

Source Name: JOTR

Citation Title: Maintenacne Assistance Report: Inspection of Dams, Joshua Tree National Monument, California

Source Name: JOTR

Citation Type: Both Graphic And Narrative

Citation Location: JOTR

Citation Author: Neff, Loy C., Meredith A. Wilson, and Gregroy Fox

Citation Title: WACC Project No. JOTR 1999 A: Archeological Site Testing at joshua Tree National Park, Riverside County, California (draft)

Year of Publication: 1999

Source Name: JOTR

Citation Type: Narrative

Citation Location: JOTR

Citation Author: McCarthy, Daniel B.
Citation Title: An Introduction to Rock Art Sites
Year of Publication: 1975
Source Name: JOTR archives
Citation Type: Both Graphic And Narrative

Citation Title: Downstream Hazard Classification, Lower, Middle, and Upper Keys Ranch Dams, Joshua Tree National Monument, California
Source Name: JOTR archives
Citation Type: Both Graphic And Narrative
Citation Location: JOTR

Citation Title: Warranty Deed #6653-235 for parcel #JOTR 102-30
Source Name: Pacific Land Resources Center
Citation Type: Graphic
Citation Location: Pacific Land Resources Program Center and/or San Bernadino County Official Records

Citation Author: Philip A. Munz
Citation Title: A California Flora
Year of Publication: 1970
Source Name: PGSO Library
Citation Type: Both Graphic And Narrative
Citation Location: PGSO library

Citation Author: Kidwell, Art
Citation Title: Ambush, The Story of Bill Keyes
Year of Publication: 1979
Source Name: PGSO Library
Citation Type: Narrative
Citation Location: PGSO Library

Citation Author: Elna Barker
Citation Title: An Island Called California
Year of Publication: 1971
Source Name: PGSO Library
Citation Type: Both Graphic And Narrative
Citation Location: PGSO library

Citation Author: Bean, Lowell John and Sylvia Brakke Vane
Citation Title: Ethnobotany of Joshua Tree National Park
Year of Publication: 1997
Source Name: PGSO Library
Citation Type: Narrative
Citation Location: PGSO Library

Citation Author: Willis Keys and Art Kidwell
Citation Title: Growing Up at the Desert Queen Ranch
Year of Publication: 1997
Source Name: PGSO Library
Citation Type: Both Graphic And Narrative
Citation Location: PGSO library

Citation Author: Robert Ornduff
Citation Title: Introduction to California Plant Life
Year of Publication: 1974
Source Name: PGSO Library
Citation Type: Both Graphic And Narrative
Citation Location: PGSO library

Citation Author: Cox, Robert M.
Citation Title: Joshua Tree "Architectural Statements"
Year of Publication: 1974
Source Name: PGSO Library
Citation Type: Narrative
Citation Location: PGSO Library

Citation Author: Warren, Claude N., Schneider, Joan S.
Citation Title: Phase I, An Archaeological Inventory of Joshua Tree National Monument
Year of Publication: 1993
Source Name: PGSO Library
Citation Type: Both Graphic And Narrative
Citation Location: PGSO Library

Citation Author: Schneider, Joan S.
Citation Title: Arhcaeological Site Record, G-11-1
Year of Publication: 1992
Source Name: University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Dept. of Anthropology
Citation Type: Narrative
Citation Location: PGSO Library

Citation Author: Schneider, Joan S.
Citation Title: Archaeological Site Record, G-11-3, Flat on Your Back Rock Shelter
Year of Publication: 1992
Source Name: University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Dept. of Anthropology
Citation Type: Both Graphic And Narrative
Citation Location: PGSO Library

Citation Author: Schneider, Joan, S.
Citation Title: DRAFT, Archaeological Excavations of Historic and Prehistoric Sites at Keys Ranch, Joshua Tree National Park
Year of Publication: 1997
Source Name: University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Dept. of Anthropology
Citation Type: Narrative
Citation Location: PGSO Library

Citation Author: Univ. of Nevada, Las Vegas, Archaeological Field School, 1998
Citation Title: DRAFT, Archaeological Excavations and Surface Collection of Historic and Prehistoric Sites at Keys Ranch, Joshua Tree National Park
Year of Publication: 1998
Source Name: University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Dept. of Anthropology
Citation Type: Narrative
Citation Location: PGSO Library

Citation Author: Warren, Claude N., Schneider, Joan S.
Citation Title: Report of Rescue Excavation at Huntington Mill Keys Desert Queen Ranch Joshua Tree National Park
Year of Publication: 1997
Source Name: University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Dept. of Anthropology
Citation Type: Narrative
Citation Location: PGSO Library

Supplemental Information

Title: Initial CLI Landscape Boundary

Description: The following text is the original boundary justification for this CLI: Property boundaries in what is now the park were based on California Land Survey square mile sections (640 acres) that were broken down into quarter sections (160 acres) and eighth sections (80 acres). Slight discrepancies in the 80-acre figures (e.g. 78.96 acres) are attributed to corrections made in acreage calculations that account for the curvature of the earth. These corrections are made along certain latitudinal and longitudinal lines passing through the study area.

The boundary for the Keys Ranch historic district, as defined by this inventory, is comprised of both privately and publicly owned land used by Keys for ranching, farming, and ore processing. This boundary contains the 878.96 acres of land that Keys owned. Two federally owned parcels of land are also included because Keys improved and used both the Cow Camp (80 acres) and Barker (78.96 acres) dams which were built on federal property. The Keys family cemetery at the Desert Queen ranch has been excluded from the landscape boundary as it is owned and managed by the Keys family. Total acreage for the Keys Ranch historic district includes the 878.96 acres of Keys' lands and the 158.96 acres of federal lands for a combined total of 1,037.92 acres.

The UTM boundaries for the proposed Keys Ranch historic district form two separate polygons. Keys' holdings have been confirmed through several sources in park archives. These sources include a 1946 land survey map, an undated land survey aerial photograph, a 1956 letter from the NPS regional director to the San Bernardino County Welfare Department (Joshua Tree National Park archives, bio data folder #175), and a 1963 letter from the Monument superintendent to Keys' mortgage company (Joshua Tree National Park archives, bio data folder #175). The aerial photograph includes property lines that corroborate the land survey map showing six plots owned by Keys for a total of 718.96 acres. The 1956 letter references another 160 acre parcel that brings Keys' land holdings to 878.96 acres; a figure which matches that referenced in a 1963 letter from the Monument to Keys' mortgage company. Two parcels under public ownership have been added to the district boundary to include the Cow Camp (80 acres) and Barker (78.96 acres) dams. The boundaries for these parcels are based on existing land division patterns and total 158.96 acres.

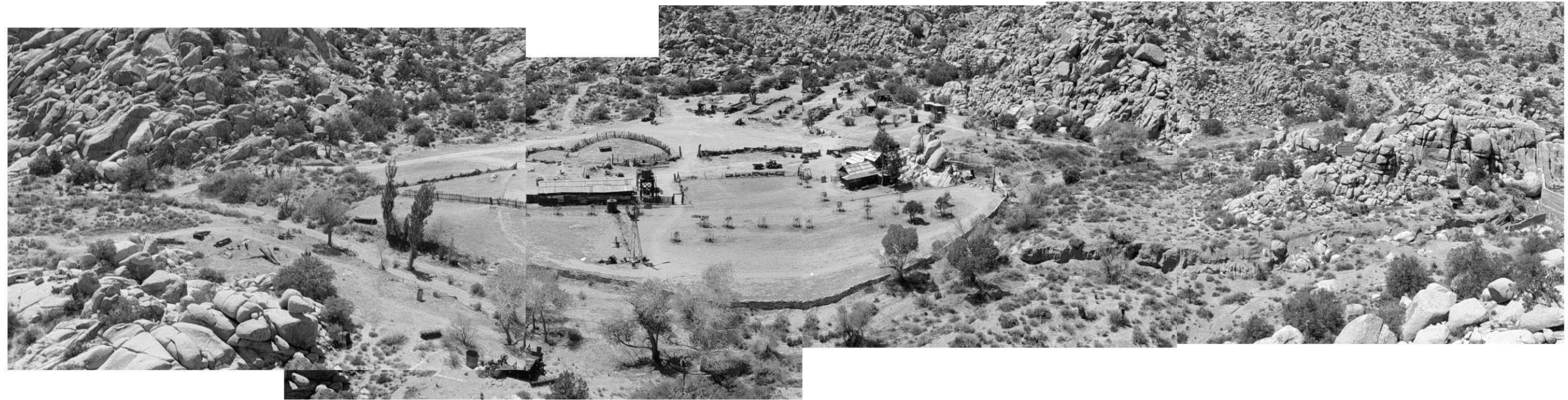
Three National Register properties exist in this area. Their boundaries were established without benefit of land ownership patterns and did not account for many historic landscape or isolated ranching features. The National Register boundary for the Desert Queen Ranch contains most of the ranch complex and is entirely on land held by Keys. Both the Barker Dam and Cow Camp boundaries include what were private and public lands.

The following boundary excerpt for the Keys family cemetery is found in Deed Book 6653, page 236 of the San Bernadino County Official Records.

"EXCEPTING from said Parcel No. 2, a determinable fee for cemetery and burial purposes in a tract of land, 15 feet by 20 feet, containing four (4) graves with room for one (1) additional grave in the Northwest corner, of the Southeast quarter of the Southeast quarter of the Northwest quarter, Section Thirty-two, Township One South, Range 8 East, San Bernadino Base and Meridian, County of San Bernadino..."

The boundary established in this study should be used to amend existing National Register nominations for the Desert Queen Ranch, Cow Camp and the Barker Dam to include the ranch's cultural landscape elements. A more inclusive view of the entire ranching operation would be given by consolidating these two National Register districts and structure into one larger ranching district. The components within the existing National Register nominations would then become features within the context of the ranching district boundary.

Supplemental Information



Keys Desert Queen Ranch, panorama. (PGSO, CLI, negative #30188-3 through 6, 1999)



Keys Desert Queen Ranch, panorama. (Joshua Tree National Park archives, accession #531-103, ca. 1917)