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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determination for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and area of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900A). Use typewriter, word processor or computer to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Kestner Homestead

other name/site number Kestner-Higley Homestead, Kestner Homestead Site

2. Location

street & number Quinault River Valley (N. side of river): Quinault Sub-district

not for publication

city or town Olympic National Park Headquarters, Port Angeles

vicinity

state Washington

code WA

county Grays Harbor

code 027

zip code 98362

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

WASHINGTON STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

National Park Service

State of Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register.
 See continuation Sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain):

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

[Signature]

7/13/2007

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
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1. Name of Property

historic name Kestner Homestead Historic District

other name/site number Kestner-Higley Homestead, Kestner Homestead Site

2. Location

street & number Quinault River Valley (1/2 mile North of Quinault River Ranger Station, along west side of Kestner Creek); Quinault Sub-district
city or town Olympic National Park Headquarters, Port Angeles

not for publication
 vicinity

state Washington code WA county Grays Harbor code 027 zip code 98362

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant _____ nationally _____ statewide locally. (_____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property _____ meets _____ does not meet the National Register criteria. (_____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State of Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

- entered in the National Register.
_____ See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register.
_____ See continuation Sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)	Category of Property (Check only one box)	Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)		
		Contributing	Noncontributing	
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)			
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	4	1	buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site			sites
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	8		structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object		1	objects
		12	2	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter N/A if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

**Number of contributing resources previously listed
in the National Register**

Historic Resources of Olympic National Park

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

domestic/single dwelling and secondary structures

vacant / not in use

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Vernacular

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete
walls wood-log / shingle
roof wood-shingle
other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Summary: The Kestner Homestead Historic District is a complex of structures and landscape features which provides a strong sense of the period of early settlement in the Quinault River Valley beginning in the late 19th century and continuing into the early 20th century, a theme significant in Olympic National Park history. The spatial arrangement of the building cluster in relationship to the cleared pasture areas and orchard provides important information about how these early homesteads were organized and functioned in this remote part of the country. Although the buildings and fencing is in various states of deterioration, the homestead overall exhibits a high degree of cultural landscape integrity in its location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Criterion A: Settlement

Period of Significance

1897 - 1944

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Significant Dates

circa 1897: house built

1944: sold to Higley

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Anton Kestner

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

- Previous documentation on file (NPS):**
preliminary determination of individual listing (36
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of Repository:

Kestner Homestead
Name of Property

Grays Harbor County, WA
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 14 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 10 438234 5262126
zone easting northing
2 10 438265 5262160

3 10 438642 5262148
zone easting northing
4 10 438668 5262113

 X See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary is an irregular polygon defined by UTM points, which outlines the clearings and orchards that constitute the Kestner Homestead Site. The building complex is located near the center of the boundary.

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the building complex, the access roads, clearings and orchard of the working Homestead Site as well as the forest fringe that embraces the site.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Gail E.H. Evans, Historian / Stephanie Toothman, Regional Historian (1986), Gretchen Luxenberg, Historian (1998), Kirstie L. Haertel, Archeologist (1999), and Jacilee Wray, Anthropologist (2005).

organization National Park Service, Columbia Cascade Support Office

date 1986/1998

street & number 909 1st Avenue

telephone (206) 220-4138

city or town Seattle

State Washington

zip code 98104-1060

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **7.5 minute USGS map** indicating the property's location.

A **sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional Items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name

street & number

telephone

city or town

state

zip code

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Kestner Homestead: Grays Harbor County, WA

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Narrative Description: The Kestner Homestead site is a landscape of many facets within a unique rain forest environment. The feeling created by these early settlers is still present within the existing fence lines and makes for a distinct sense of place. Today, although abandoned, with many of the individual site features in ruin, several of these early larger scale spatial patterns remain evident in the landscape. Two of the three original pasture areas remain open. The building cluster still occupies the center of the site. The historic orchard remains, although some trees are gone. The access road and bridge remain as the primary access to the site.

Access to the Kestner Homestead site is obtained in two ways: walking an old logging road west and to the north of the National Park Service's Quinault Ranger Station, and a drive about five minutes east and north from the station. The walking route is a journey through second-growth forest of big leaf maple, hemlock, Sitka spruce, vine maple, red alder, salmonberry, blackberry, huckleberry, and various other second-growth species. The auto route follows the North Shore Road east then north to Canoe Creek Road. Just north of this intersection on Canoe Creek Road is the eastern entrance to the homestead. The homestead site itself is defined by the North Shore Road and Canoe Creek Road on the east and the edge of the coniferous forest as it wraps around the east, north, and west sides of the site. Kestner Creek traverses the east side of the site, passing through in a northeasterly to southwesterly direction, creating a natural boundary along this edge of the site. The boundary polygon is defined by the UTM points.

The homestead is an area comprised of cleared land, formerly cleared land, land in various stages of succession, planted areas, a complex of buildings, a bridge, fences, and other miscellaneous materials associated with the function of farming and ranching. The largest and most prominent building was the barn. It was an example of the timber frame construction used historically for this type of structure. The barn was removed in 1997 because of its dilapidated condition, due primarily to powder post beetle infestation. On one third of the foot print a structure of the size and proportions of the original barn was constructed in 2001. This new structure is sided with materials salvaged from the original barn. As funding is available, other portions of the barn will be reconstructed to the original scale. The interior of the building is open to serve as a sheltered meeting place for community groups, visitors and educational groups. The new structure preserves the dominant barn silhouette in the cluster of buildings. Remaining concrete floor slabs and several columns remain outlining portions of the full barn footprint.

The area just to the south of the house is a fenced orchard. The split-rail fences around the orchard are intact. There are two large and distinct areas within the northern-most fence lines. The western portion is a grassy pasture being quickly overtaken by young alder species succession. The eastern portion has been planted in Douglas fir trees. The northernmost fences on the site separate this pasture area from a once clear cut area now existing in the midst of succession. The eastern-most boundary of the homestead is Canoe Creek Road. At the eastern entrance to the site, a dirt road begins and runs west to the complex of buildings through a grassy area (southern pastures). These areas are divided into a western unfenced area and a fenced area closer to the buildings where the fences have been upgraded to accommodate stock animals. Between this fenced area and the split-rail fence of the orchard, the road runs north/south from the buildings to the North Shore Road. It crosses Kestner Creek (the site's south boundary) via a Bailey bridge that replaced an old wooden bridge that was dilapidated and unsafe for vehicular use. This is the primary entrance to the homestead.

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Cultural Landscape Characteristics

Spatial Organization: The Kestners built their homestead on the northeast side of Lake Quinault over a period of years, clearing the dense forest north of the Quinault River. In addition to the forest, which provided building materials, the site also had a water supply. As the site developed, the spatial organization of the Kestner Homestead focused on the cluster of buildings in the center of the cleared area. Although the number of structures within this area fluctuated over the years, the general use and function remained the same throughout the historic period. Primary buildings in this area included the main residence, storage buildings, and a number of smaller outbuildings. Immediately surrounding the complex were a number of informal work areas connecting the pastures (north) and croplands (domestic garden) (east), and a relatively large fruit orchard to the south with pear, cherry, and apple trees. Documentation suggests that all three pastures, the orchard, and the garden were fenced. Historically, primary access to the site was from the south, crossing a bridge over Kestner Creek. Another access road entered the site from the west.

Natural Systems and Features: The natural landform and physiographic features of the Quinault River Valley had a strong influence on the establishment of the settlement patterns throughout the area. In the late 1800s, knowledge among white settlers of the rich soils along the river valley and the flat arable land attracted many homesteaders in pursuit of subsistence farming and ranching. By the time the Kestners arrived in the Quinault area in the 1890s, most of the choice lands were already claimed. Moving to the east side of Lake Quinault, the Kestners found the river valley narrowed rather dramatically. Instead of choosing one of the available narrow bands of land confined by the lake on one side and steep forested slopes on the other, the Kestners selected a site with more moderate slopes within the expansive flood plain of the Quinault River.

Situated on the edge of the rain forest, vegetation in the area of the Kestner site was historically very dense. While the forest provided building materials for the construction of structures at the site, it also required remarkable effort to clear the land for pasture, crops, and suitable building sites. Most of the forest was a mix of fir, spruce, hemlock, and cedar, with some deciduous trees along the water. Of the natural features and systems that influenced the development of the homestead, water was perhaps the most troublesome, inundating the property numerous times over the history of the site. The Quinault River and Kestner Creek, both subject to seasonal flooding, overflowed almost annually, beginning the first winter the Kestners were in the valley. Today the Kestner site is surrounded by forest and lies on the boundary of a designated wilderness zone in Olympic National Park. Kestner Creek and the Quinault River also continue to flow as they did historically.

Circulation: Roads through the Kestner site divide the landscape into three quadrants. A gravel lane is the original and most prominent circulation feature in the site. The lane provides primary access to the property from the south (the North Shore Road). Traces of an old logging road bisect the road east-west, and approximates the location of a historical route between the building cluster and the eastern portion of the land claim (outside the current identified site). The logging road provides an east entrance to the district from Canoe Creek Road. A trail through the rain forest provides access from the NPS ranger station and joins the logging road from the west on the west boundary of the site. The two main roads—the gravel access road and the old logging road—are historic and significant landscape features of the site and contributing resources.

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Land Use: Historic land use patterns and activities associated with the Kestner property focused on subsistence, agriculture, and ranching. Early on in the development of the site, land was cleared to provide space for buildings, pasture, crops, and an orchard. Beef cattle, milk cows, sheep and work horses grazed in the pastures and forest. The land within the building cluster was used for kitchen and flower gardens and for raising chickens, geese, and pigs. Although abandoned today, the open fields, building cluster, and the orchard are tangible features of historic land use activities of the Kestner's subsistence farming in the Olympic rain forest. The two remaining pastures are contributing resources of the site.

Vegetation: Historically, most of the land cleared by the Kestners was used for pasture and hay production. The field east of the complex, across Kestner Creek, was used for hay. The north and west fields totaled about 10 acres and historically were the largest in the Quinault Valley. Remnant tree stumps supporting young conifer trees (nurse logs) are present at the east end of the east field: these features are characteristic of homesteading in a forest—if the stump was too large to remove by hand, crops were planted around it. The open field across from the house historically had a vegetable garden with potatoes, carrots, cabbage, corn, and other vegetables. Oats and corn were grown and harvested for livestock feed. The fenced area south of the house was set aside for the orchard. During the historic period, there were approximately 30 trees, a combination of apple, cherry, crabapple, and pear. The small kitchen garden was located between the house and barn. A fenced flower garden contained geraniums, bleeding heart, and a rose bush; the rose bush remains south of the house, supported by the orchard fence. It is the only ornamental plant in the building cluster. Scattered remnant daffodils south of the orchard and west of the North Shore Road entrance mark the location of a school house once located on the property.

Today, the forest surrounding the site is comprised of big leaf maples, hemlocks, and Sitka spruce. The north field, which has lost integrity, was planted with Douglas fir trees in 1944. In the remaining open fields, pasture grass is the predominant vegetation, although some intrusion by rye/sedges has occurred in the northwest portion of the field, and some red alder is coming into the east portion.

Buildings and Structures

House: The original south portion of the house was built in 1900-1905 by Anton Kestner after the first home on the property (1897) was demolished in a flood. It is of hewn log construction covered over with cedar shingles that flare at the base. The original cedar log foundation, which was laid directly on the ground, was replaced in 1948 with concrete piers. The steep gable roof at the south portion is constructed of log rafters. It was a simple building, rectangular in shape, 1-1/2 stories in height, and had a gable roof covered with shakes.

The north portion of the house comprising the garage, breezeway, and west porch was constructed in 1973-1974 by Orlo Higley. This addition is built of post and beam construction with board and batten siding. The foundation is a concrete slab on grade. The shallower gable roof at the north addition is constructed of dimension lumber. The entire roof is sheathed in cedar shingles. The roofline is interrupted by three chimneys: two of brick and one of concrete block. The east porch replaces an earlier gabled entry. This porch is an extension of the old roofline and is supported by rough columns with brackets. Unusual wood trough gutters supported by brackets drain the south roof.

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The house is comprised of many types of doors and windows. A few of the original wood sash remain, but many have been replaced with metal sliding windows. The house can be entered from the east through a flush wood door or a pair of metal sliding glass doors. The interior of the house was extensively remodeled in the 1950s with new partitions and finishes, covering over (or removing) the original vertical split cedar boards. This is a contributing building of the historic site.

Tack Shed (Root House): This 1-1/2 story rectangular building is constructed of rough hewn logs with split pole chinking inside and cedar shingles outside. The gable roof is constructed of log rafters and sheathed with cedar shakes about 2' in length. The north gable end of the shed is sheathed in beveled lap siding. The foundation logs have deteriorated and the structure has been stabilized with concrete piers and large pieces of logs. A shed roof supported by three rough posts has been added to the east side. A plywood door accesses the north side of the tack shed and a rough board door accesses the south side; the south door has one light. A double-hung wood window is on the north elevation. This is a contributing building of the historic site.

Utility Shed (Smokehouse): This one-and-a-half story square building has a timber foundation with wood-frame construction and rough lap siding. The gable roof has exposed purlins and is sheathed in cedar shakes. The lean-to addition to the west has a corrugated metal roof that extends from the ridge of the main gable. It is in good condition. This is a contributing building of the historic site.

Vehicle Repair Shed: This one-story post and beam structure has a log and timber foundation and is an open structure. The gable roof is sheathed with cedar shakes. The structure was used for vehicle maintenance. Vehicles were driven in at the east end onto two boards located over an access pit. A platform is located at the west end. This is a contributing structure of the historic site.

Metal Shed: This two-story rectangular shed is of post and beam construction with wood roof trusses. Both the roof and walls are clad with standing rib metal sheathing. The east side has two large sliding doors and a plywood door. The west side has one large and one small sliding door. All doors are sheathed the same as the walls and roof. Two small metal sliding windows are located on the south side. This is a non-contributing building of the historic site.

Oil and Gas Shed: This 1-1/2 story rectangular building has a timber foundation. The shed area to the north is of wood-frame construction clad with corrugated metal sheathing. The gable ends are clad in cedar shingles. The gable roof on the north has exposed rafters and cedar shakes. The lean-to addition to the south has a cedar shake roof that extends from the ridge of the main gable. This post and beam lean-to has a timber foundation which supports a loading dock. This is a contributing building of the historic site.

Nearly every homestead had one or more barns. Anton Kestner erected three barns on his property along Kestner Creek one mile northeast of Quinault Lake: one, measuring 54' by 112', was among the largest in the valley. The last remaining barn was removed in 1997 because of its deteriorated condition. Other contributing structures (defined in the Small Scale Elements) of the historic site are: the split-rail fencing and gate, the bridge, two pastures, and two historic roads.

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Cluster Arrangement: the cluster of buildings is dominated by the house today; although historically the barn was the largest building on the site (the barn collapsed in 1997 and was removed for safety reasons). East of the barn is the second Kestner house (first one was lost in a flood). The original south portion of the existing house was built in 1900-1905 by Kestner using cedar and fir from the forest. A covered breezeway on the north side connected the house to a wood shed and apple house (storage); this was converted into a garage for the family car in the 1920s. The remaining outbuildings (root cellar, smokehouse, and chicken house) were built of post and beam and of a smaller scale. In later years, between 1944 and 1987, the Higleys converted the root cellar into the tack shed, the smokehouse into a utility shed and added a vehicle repair shelter, a metal shed, and an addition to the north end of the house in 1973-4. The chicken house collapsed in the mid-1980s.

Small-Scale Elements: The split-rail fences are a significant boundary feature as well as being structural elements in the landscape. Posts and rails from the nearby forest were split by hand. Portions of the fence have been replaced by post and wire fencing (date unknown). A three point swinging gate near the northwest corner of the barn site is made of split timber and is hung from a central post. In 1934 a water generated pump was installed on a stream on the north slope; two power poles remain in the building cluster—these are associated with the electricity that was generated by this pump. A gas powered “donkey” used to log timber off the property sits west of the barn site at the edge of the forest. This was purchased by Higley and brought to the homestead as a memento or souvenir of his previous logging work elsewhere. While it represents the type of equipment used by settlers to clear land, it has no history of use at this site.

This homestead was not included in the 1982 park-wide inventory of historic buildings 40 years of age and older because the NPS did not own the property at that time. It is now under the jurisdiction of the federal government.

The contributing resources in the Kestner Homestead Site include 4 buildings (House, Tack Shed, Utility Shed, Oil/Gas Shed), one structure (Vehicle Repair Shed), and seven small-scale features (fencing, bridge, gate, two pastures, and two historic roads).

Statement of Significance:

Summary: The Kestner Homestead Site, built 1897, is the oldest surviving settler-built homestead still extant in the Quinault River Valley on the Olympic Peninsula within Olympic National Park. It represents the period of early settlement in the park, a theme important in park history. Several intact homestead districts remain outside of federal lands but few of these retain the original barn or out buildings. At Kestner, three historic outbuildings have survived and the reconstruction of the barn will give scale to the importance and prominence of the barn as part of the homestead district. As a result, the homestead retains the feel of the close assembly of buildings dominated by the barn. The property exhibits cultural landscape integrity, in its overall spatial organization, response to natural features, cluster arrangement, circulation and vegetation patterns, buildings and other structural remains, and materials. It retains integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship (although some of the buildings are in a deteriorated condition), feeling, and association.

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Narrative: By the time white settlers reached the Olympic Peninsula, five Indian reservations had been established at the Makah, Quileute, Hoh, Quinault, and Skokomish river mouths. During the 1850s, settlers began claiming land around the east and north coastal fringes of the peninsula in about 20 areas. Some of these were at Port Townsend, Sequim, and Dungeness. During the 1860s-1880s, small colonies were established in La Push, Clallam Bay, and Pysht. During the 1880s-1890s, isolated settlements and individual homesteaders circled the uninhabited core of the peninsula. In 1891 homesteaders interested in farming began to move inland where land was still available. Favored sites were around Lake Crescent, Lake Ozette, Lake Quinault, and Lake Cushman, and along creek and river drainages such as the Elwha, Sol Duc, Bogachiel, Hoh, Queets, and Quinault.

Settlers in the upper Quinault Valley faced problems similar to those encountered elsewhere in the interior west side of the Olympic Peninsula: isolation from the outside world; thick, dense forests and underbrush along the river bottom; and long months of heavy precipitation. With headwaters on the southeastern slopes of the Olympic range, the main branch of the Quinault and its north fork descend through terrain described by the Dodwell-Rixon survey party as very rugged and mountainous. Before arriving at the four and one-half mile long Lake Quinault, the winding path of the river forms a broad level valley primarily of bench land. From the southwestern end of Lake Quinault the river continues for more than 25 miles before emptying into the Pacific Ocean. In addition to geographic and climatic constraints, an approximately 200,000-acre swath of land, taking in much of the lower lake itself, as well as a portion of land on the southwestern end of Lake Quinault, was established as the Quinault Indian reservation in 1873 and thus closed to homesteading.

White settlement of the upper Quinault River Valley, like other interior river valleys on the Olympic Peninsula, did not begin until the late 1880s. The three earliest known settlers arrived in 1888 and claimed land at the northeast end of the lake and on bottomland about two miles northeast of the lake. Ziegler Creek, emptying into Lake Quinault on the northeast, is presumably named for pioneering settler Frank Ziegler. By the end of 1890, nineteen others had settled in the Quinault Valley northeast of the lake and at the north and east end of Lake Quinault. This community of early Quinault settlers included those whose names appear on present-day maps of the area, such as Antone Kestner (Kestner Creek), A.R. Merriman (Merriman Creek and Merriman Falls), and a Mr. Gatton (Gatton Creek).

In late 1889 and 1890 three separate expeditions set out to cross the Olympic Mountains and explore its inner reaches. Just as the Elwha River Valley was selected as the entry to the mountainous interior, the Quinault Valley was often the route of exit. In late November 1889, the exploring team of C.A. and S.C. Gilman descended into the Quinault Valley after a three-month hike across the rugged eastern section of the Olympics. At Quinault they counted around thirty-one settlers. Five months later the Press party expedition, beginning in the Elwha River Valley, knew their trans-Olympic trek was nearly over when they discovered a vacant trapper's cabin below the juncture of the Quinault and the North Fork Quinault rivers. About eight miles above Lake Quinault they encountered a settler, who turned out to be a hunter by the name of F.S. Antrim. Although his residence was in Aberdeen, he did have a stock of supplies cached at a settler's cabin located where the Quinault River flows into the lake. Farther down the river, yet above Lake Quinault, the party passed two more

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uninhabited log cabins. Expedition member Charles Barnes noted the claims as looking valuable but that the houses looked uninhabitable. After reaching Lake Quinault, the Press party members apparently made no record of the numbers or locations of settlers in the area, but certainly there were several by 1890. Lieutenant Joseph O'Neil, arriving in the Quinault Valley in the fall of 1890 after leading an expedition party through much of the southern half of the Olympic Mountains, observed that the Quinault Valley was well adapted to agriculture and there was fertile bottom land. From the accounts left by members of these three exploring expeditions, it is apparent that existing public records of Anglo-occupation of the upper Quinault Valley are not complete. In addition to, and perhaps even prior to, the establishment of actual settlement claims, hunters, trappers, squatters, and short-term claimants traveled and lived in the upper Quinault Valley.

Known homestead claimants continued to arrive in the broad upper Quinault Valley and around the shoreline of the eastern half of the lake during the 1890s. Between 1891 and 1900, more than thirty new settlers, several with families, arrived in the upper Quinault Valley. Wright Canyon, Higley Creek, McCormick Creek, and Haas Creek denote the general location of the homesites of A.T. Wright, Orte L. Higley, W.J. McCormick, and Louis and Joseph Haas respectively, who were among this slightly later group of Quinault settlers. While more infill occurred on the river bottom lands at the northeast end of the lake, new arrivals also took up land farther up the river. By 1900, small acreages of cleared, slashed, cultivated, and fenced land may have extended from the lake to the junction of the Quinault River and the North Fork Quinault, approximately ten miles upriver from Lake Quinault.

Subsistence farming was the primary pursuit of settlers with the ambition of permanent occupancy. After initially constructing a house, settlers immediately turned to clearing, slashing, and cultivating the land. Early surveyors reported that bottom and bench land had abundant, rich, black loam alluvial soil, well adapted to agriculture. Quinault settlers planted good-sized fields of grain, clover, and hay for grazing, as well as smaller parcels of vegetables. Within 20 years of initial settlement, cultivated fields ranged in size from three to thirty acres. Several settlers planted small orchards. Both cleared and cultivated acres were fenced. Nearly every homestead had one or more barns. Sheds, shops, root houses, and other outbuildings typified these early homestead farm units. Alfred V. Higley located near the northernmost tip of Lake Quinault, and Antone Kestner had two of the most well developed complexes of farm buildings.

The difficulties of making a living from even the fertile soil of the upper Quinault River were insurmountable for some, as they were for many along the interior river valleys of the Olympic Peninsula. Transportation along the river and lakeshore and to the Pacific Ocean was initially limited to primitive trails and canoe. The tenure of many early settlers was short. Often, however, they were replaced with ambitious new arrivals.

The community of residents in the upper Quinault showed strong signs of continued development and future prosperity as early as 1890. In that year, land speculator Dr. Owen G. Chase organized a group of Hoquiam businessmen and others to form the Quinault Township Company, which bought a narrow strip of land along the entire south side of the lake and divided it into lots for sale. Dr. Chase was appointed the first postmaster of the Quinault townsite in 1891, but soon turned the job over to Alfred V. Higley. During his first year as acting assistant postmaster, Alfred Higley and his son Orte kept a store and opened the first hotel on Lake Quinault. The hotel closed a year later when the Higleys moved from the Quinault townsite to the north shore of the lake.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

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The two Higleys were also involved in providing Quinault residents with a regular freighting service that plied the waters of Lake Quinault and the river. Access to the community was markedly improved when Alfred Higley organized settlers to cut a trail from Quinault to the townsite of Humptulips, eighteen miles to the south. From there, an existing primitive road connected Humptulips to the town of Hoquiam. By 1914, a puncheon road (split wood planks laid side-by-side across a road grade) on the path of the earlier trail was completed.

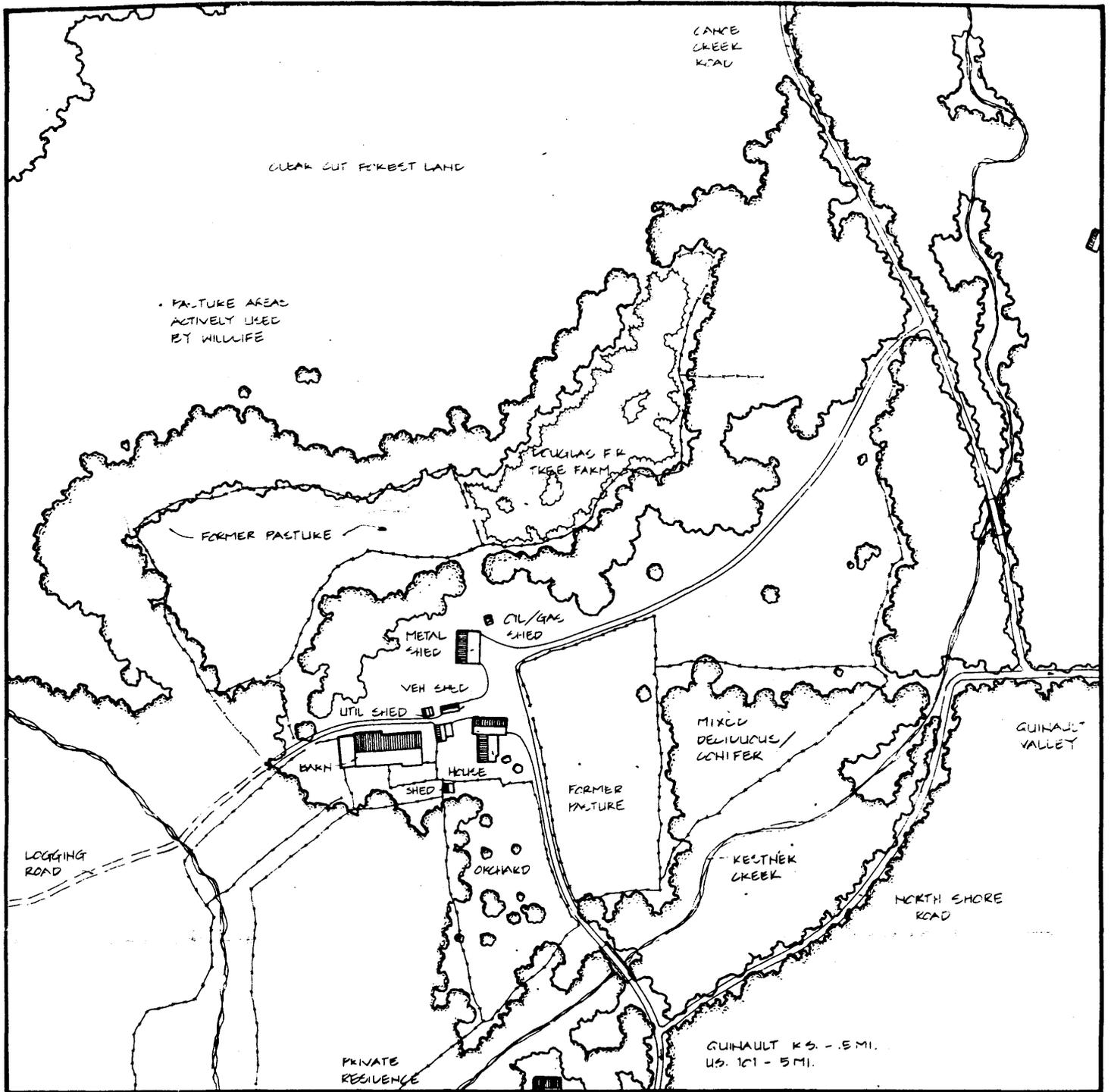
As the Quinault community developed in the 1890s and early 1900s, the settlers' reliance on neighboring cities to the south lessened as they worked to bring needed services to the upper Quinault Valley. In 1892 the first school was built with donated labor and stood about one mile east of the lake on Ziegler Creek. In 1897 a second school was constructed east of the lake on the banks of the Quinault River. An important service was provided to local residents when Alfred Higley was appointed a U.S. Land Commissioner. Higley was also the keeper of law and order in the community, serving as deputy sheriff and, later, justice of the peace.

The robust spirit of development in the upper Quinault Valley was subdued when the area was included in the Olympic Forest Reserve in 1897. The initial onrush of new settlers to the area was a phenomenon not repeated after the late 1890s. In a 1908 letter written by Quinault settler and U.S. Commissioner John A. Ewell to the Secretary of the Interior asking for the removal of the Quinault area from the reserve, Ewell noted that only three settlers arrived after the creation of the reserve in 1897. Although permits were issued for some new construction after 1910, it appears that the upper Quinault River Valley's major building boom had ended by then, and with it the era of settlement.

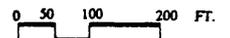
Today, the only settlement structures that remain on publicly owned land in the Quinault subdistrict of Olympic National Park are those at the Kestner Homestead Site. The Kestners were typical settlers who first built a small cabin and cleared a vegetable plot. This was a requirement of the government in giving individuals property: settlers were required to build on and cultivate their land in order to claim it as an official homestead. The Kestners had to face the same problem as all settlers on the peninsula: this land was conducive to rain forest, and any land left unwatched would soon be filled in by vegetation. Most settlers on the peninsula gave up their battles with the rain forest within ten years of starting out. However, the settlers of the Quinault Valley had a few advantages. They could transport supplies and produce by boat across Lake Quinault and on the Quinault River. The people of the community helped each other. As new technology was introduced and added to their lives, it became easier to keep the fields cleared, build sound structures, hunt, protect themselves, and transport supplies and produce. In addition, the introduction of the timber industry to the area gave these people a source of cash.

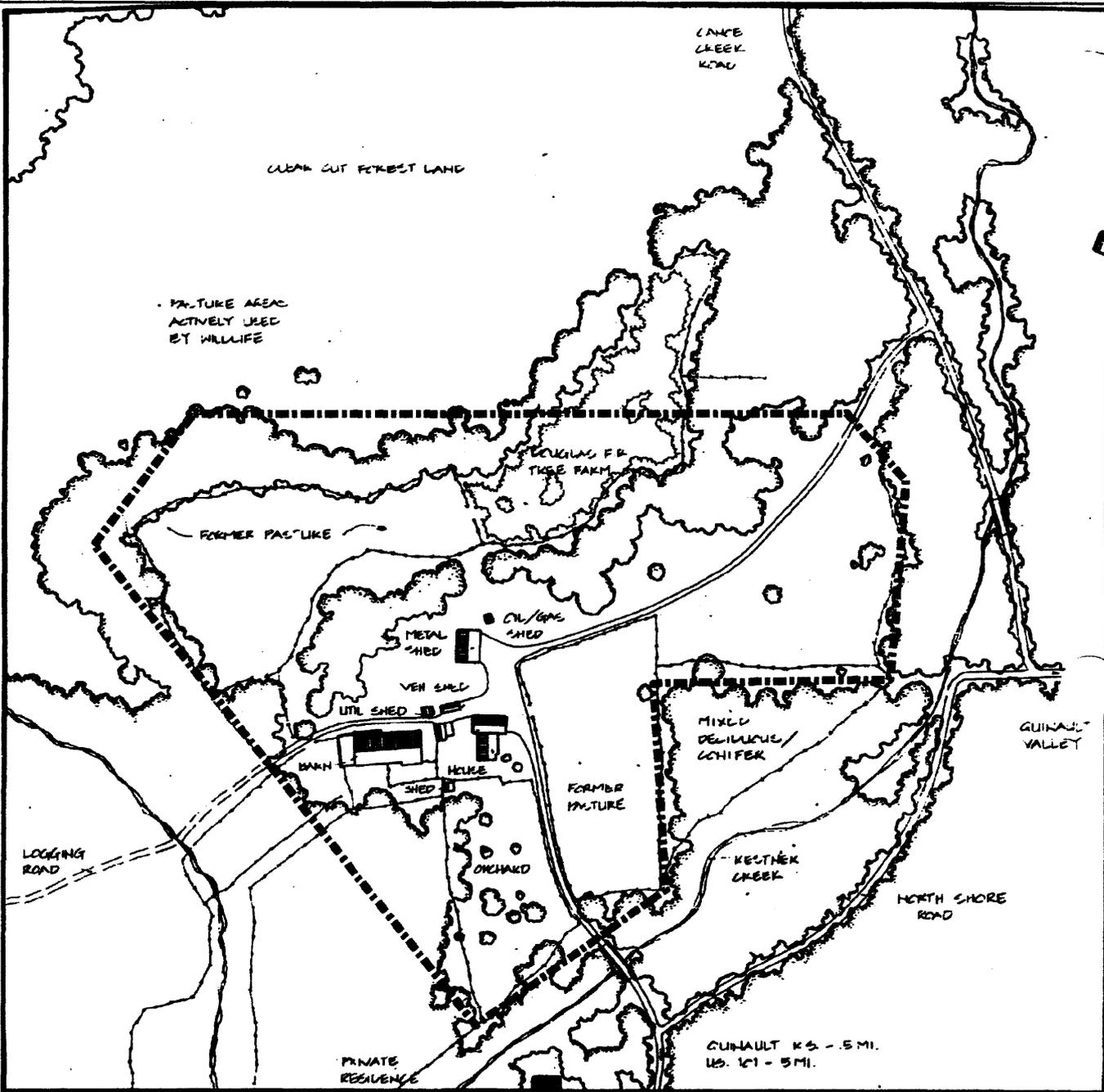
The Kestner Homestead was established by Anton and Josepha Kestner, Austrian immigrants who came to the valley in the 1890s. Anton took a homestead grant in 1891 and Josepha joined him with their two sons Joseph and Otto in 1892.

During their first winter in the valley, they lost practically everything, including their first house, in a flood. The first house was built on land which Anton cleared the difficult way by cutting, burning, and digging by hand

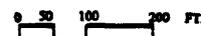


OLYMPIC NATIONAL PARK-WASHINGTON
HISTORIC HOMESTEAD STUDY
KESTNER-HIGLEY
HOMESTEAD





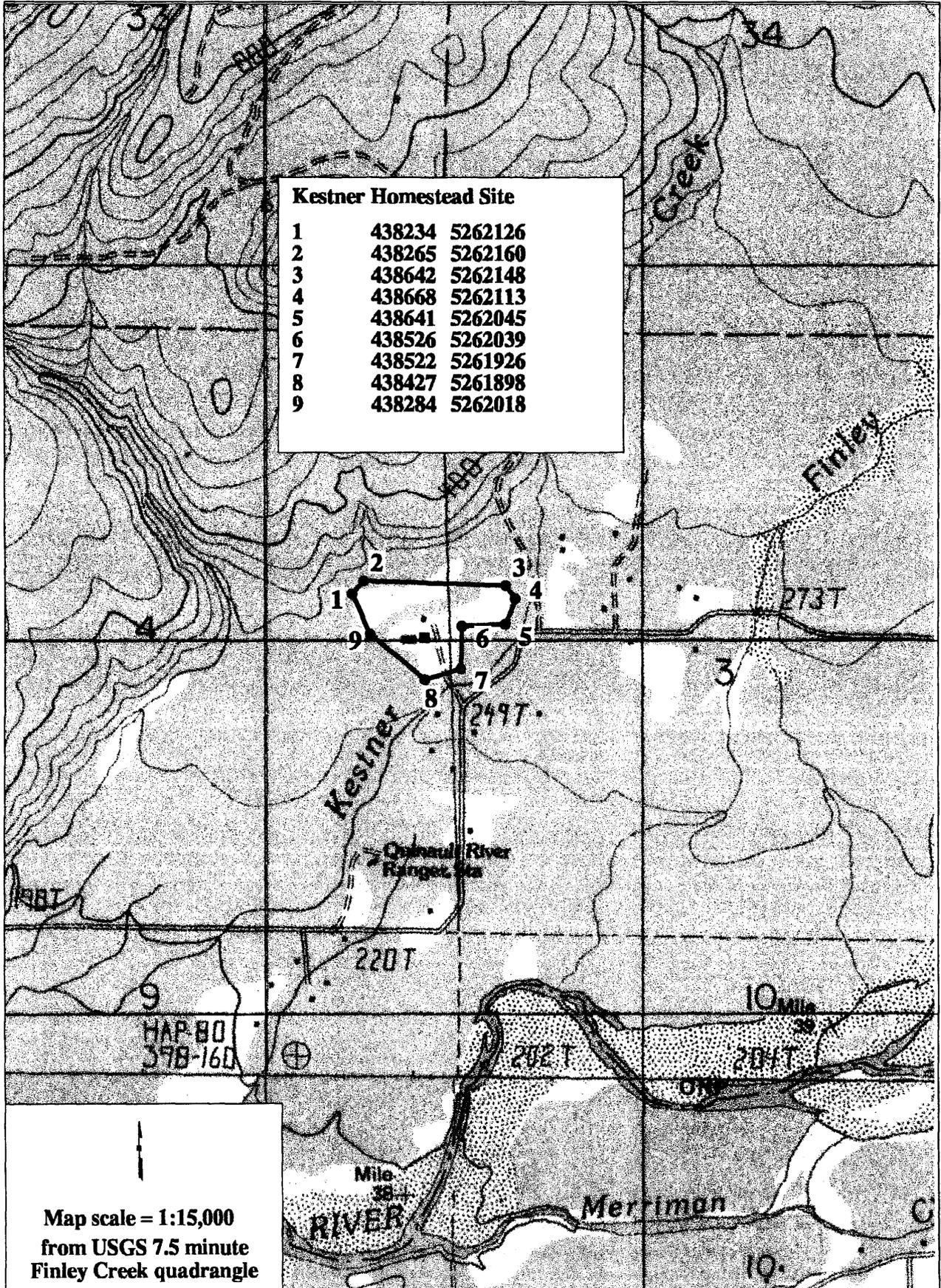
OLYMPIC NATIONAL PARK-WASHINGTON
HISTORIC HOMESTEAD STUDY
KESTNER-HIGLEY
HOMESTEAD



 = Historic District Boundary

'38

'39



Kestner Homestead Site

1	438234	5262126
2	438265	5262160
3	438642	5262148
4	438668	5262113
5	438641	5262045
6	438526	5262039
7	438522	5261926
8	438427	5261898
9	438284	5262018

Map scale = 1:15,000
 from USGS 7.5 minute
 Finley Creek quadrangle

'38

'39



KESTNER HOMESTEAD HISTORIC SITE

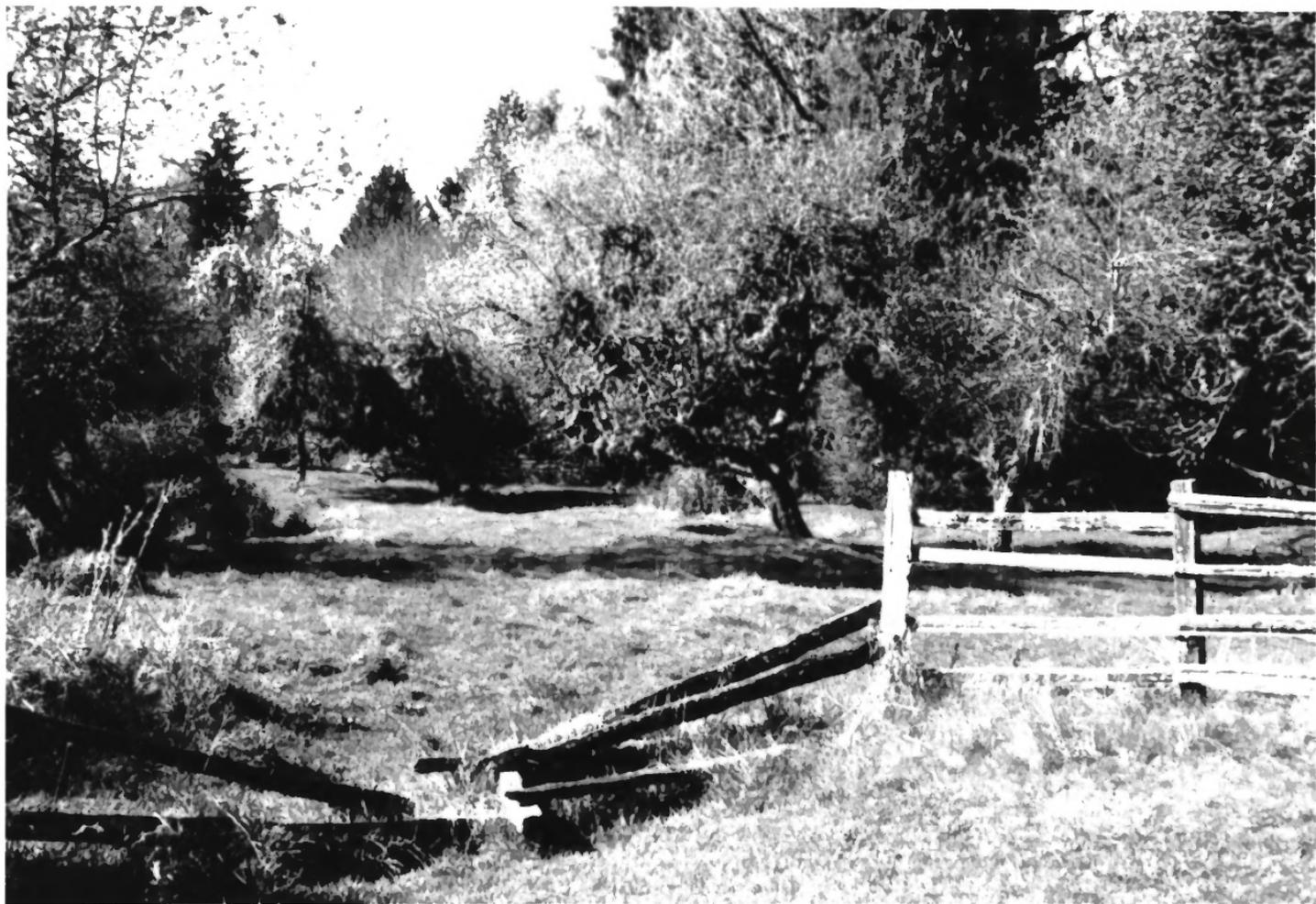
JEFFERSON COUNTY, WA

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KESTNER HOMESTEAD HISTORIC SITE
JEFFERSON COUNTY, WA

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KESTNER HOMESTEAD HISTORIC SITE

JEFFERSON COUNTY, WA

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OLYM-649

OLYM 18381

KESTNER HOMESTEAD HISTORIC SITE
HOUSE

GRAYS HARBOR COUNTY, WA

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OLYM 18381

OLYM-649

KESTNER HOMESTEAD HISTORIC SITE

SMOKE HOUSE

GRAYS HARBOR COUNTY, WA

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OLYM - 649

OLYM 18381

KESTNER HOMESTEAD HISTORIC SITE
OILHOUSE
GRAYS HARBOR COUNTY, WA
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OLYM-649

OLYM 18381

KESTNER HOMESTEAD HISTORIC SITE
TACKHOUSE
GRAYS HARBOR COUNTY, WA

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OLYM-649

OLYM 18381

KESTNER HOMESTEAD HISTORIC SITE

GREASE RACK

GRAYS HARBOR COUNTY, WA

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