



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY NOTIFICATION

National Register of Historic Places National Park Service

Project Name: Ross ISR

Location: Crook County

State: Wyoming

Request submitted by: Larry W. Camper, Director, Division of Decommissioning, Uranium Recovery and Waste Programs Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555-0001

Date received: 04/03/2015

Additional information received:

Name of property	SHPO opinion	<u>Eligibility</u> Secretary of the Interior's opinion	Criteria
6501-			
136 48CK2070	Unevaluated/Requested additional information	Eligible	A
137 48CK2076	Unevaluated/Requested additional information	Eligible	A
138 48CK2080	Unevaluated/Requested additional information	Eligible	A
139 48CK2087	Unevaluated/Requested additional information	Eligible	A
140 48CK2089	Unevaluated/Requested additional information	Eligible	A
141 48CK2214	Unevaluated/Requested additional information	Eligible	A
142 48CK2215	Unevaluated/Requested additional information	Eligible	A
143 48CK2218	Unevaluated/Requested additional information	Eligible	A
144 48CK2219	Unevaluated/Requested additional information	Eligible	A
145 48CK2220	Unevaluated/Requested additional information	Eligible	A
146 48CK2222	Unevaluated/Requested additional information	Eligible	A
147 48CK2227	Unevaluated/Requested additional information	Eligible	A


Keeper of the National Register
WASO-27

Date: 5/25/15

Revised 7/13/15

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Comments:

Based on the information before us, the twelve identified sites appear eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the areas of Ethnic Heritage-Native American, Social History, and Religion. The sites reflect locations of historic Native American (ceremonial) use and are associated with significant patterns of traditional cultural activity by Native American (Northern Plains) tribes in the headwaters area of the Little Missouri River. Tribes ascribing cultural and religious value to the sites include the Santee Sioux Tribe of Nebraska, Crow Creek Sioux Tribe, Rosebud Sioux Tribe, Yankton Sioux Tribe, Northern Cheyenne Tribe, Turtle Mountain band of Chippewa Indians, Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma, Northern Arapaho Tribe, Fort Belknap Indian Community, and Eastern Shoshone Tribe. The sites include ceremonial places, vision questing and fasting sites, stone circles, cairns, and traditional gathering areas, many of which afford commanding views of Devils Tower (Bear Lodge) and other sacred landforms.

The current documentation provides ample evidence supporting the special character of such sites from the perspective of the traditional Native American communities. The contextual materials convey the special connection between myth, ceremony, and spiritualism and specific physical places on the landscape, which historically helped define tribal identity, and continue to remain important aspects of modern cultural identity. Unlike many traditional cultural places that are well known through time and can document an unbroken lineage of continued use by a particular traditional community, the specific locations of these 12 identified sites were not necessarily known to current tribal representatives. Rather, knowledge of the abundant extent of traditional cultural activity in the project area was known more generally through myth, oral history and tradition, along with the knowledge that certain sites associated with the historic practices undertaken within these areas could be readily re-identified by tribal representatives and experts. The recovery of information regarding specific sites and resources, and their reconnection and "re-integration" into contemporary tribal memory is considered an important aspect of tribal cultural identity.

The sites, largely stone collections, half-buried cairns, and purposeful stone arrangements that reflect locations of prior Native American use, are often difficult to discern by those outside the tribal community. The NRC therefore utilized tribal experts to complete separate field survey

work, entrusting the tribal experts to locate and identify their own sites.

Note has been made that for a certain small number of sites documentation of a direct relationship between a particular location and a specific tribe's cultural practices may have been limited, either by reluctance on the part of tribal representatives to reveal additional (sensitive) details or as a result of a lack of more comprehensive survey follow-up. Integrity of relationship is often an essential component of most traditional cultural place evaluations. In the course of evaluating these 12 sites, even when documentation of the integrity of relationship may have been lacking, the documentation provided sufficient context for understanding the role and importance of such sites to local Native American culture in general and their ongoing value as reflections of historic traditional activity. Whether evaluated as traditional cultural places in the conventional sense or as historic sites of traditional activity, the 12 sites represent resources of recognized historic cultural value to local tribes and are considered eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

While these evaluations in some cases represent a more tenuous connection between traditional group and sacred site than those locations that demonstrate, uninterrupted continuous use by a single group, and in many ways reflect one of the first such determinations made by the Keeper, we believe a case is nonetheless made that from the Native American viewpoint these sites are important elements of a shared cultural heritage worthy of protection.