## 1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: Ninemile Smokejumper Training Sites

Other Name/Site Number: Ninemile Remount Depot; U.S. Forest Service Ranger Station; Ninemile Ranger Station; Camp Menard Picnic Area; Stony Creek CCC Camp; Ninemile CCC Camp, Ninemile Airfield

## 2. LOCATION

Street & Number: 20325 Remount Road and vicinity Not for publication:

City/Town: Huson Vicinity:

State: MT County: Missoula Zip Code: 59846

## 3. CLASSIFICATION

| Ownership of Property | | Category of Property | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Private: | _ | Building(s): | |
| Public-Local: | _ | District: | X |
| Public-State: | _ | Site: | |
| Public-Federal: | X | Structure: | |
| | | Object: | |

Number of Resources within Property

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|---|---|---|
| _ | _ | buildings |
| _ | 3 | sites |
| _ | _ | structures |
| _ | 1 | objects |
| _ | _ | Total |

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register:
U.S. Forest Service Remount Depot: 12 contributing buildings and 4 contributing structures

Name of Related Multiple Property Listing: America's Aviation Heritage theme study; World War II and the American Home Front theme study

## 4. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this ____ nomination _X_ 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 X_ does not meet the criteria for National Historic Landmark designation.

Signature of Certifying Official Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

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

Signature of Commenting or Other Official Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

## 5. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ Entered in the National Register
___ Determined eligible for the National Register
___ Determined not eligible for the National Register
___ Removed from the National Register
___ Other (explain):

Signature of Keeper Date of Action

## 6. FUNCTION OR USE

Historic: Government
Agriculture
Current: Government
Agriculture
Recreation and Culture

Sub: Other
Animal Facility
Sub: Other
Animal Facility
Outdoor Recreation

## 7. DESCRIPTION

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION: Colonial Revival/Cape Cod

MATERIALS:
Foundation: Concrete
Walls: Wood/weatherboard
Roof: Wood shingles/ asphalt shingles
Other:

**Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.**

The proposed Ninemile Smokejumper Training NHL lies within the Lolo National Forest where the lush meadows of the Ninemile Divide gently decline to the Clark Fork River, twenty miles west of Missoula, Montana. The proposed landmark consists of three sites and one historic district, all associated with the creation of a national smokejumping training program by the U.S. Forest Service between 1939 and 1954: the historic U.S. Forest Service Remount Depot, listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1980, the Stony Creek Civilian Conservation Corps camp site, the Grand Menard Civilian Conservation Corps camp site, and the airfield directly adjacent to the depot's irrigated hay fields. The U.S. Forest Service Remount Depot contains 15 contributing buildings, four contributing structures (entrance gates, scales, loading ramp, and all corrals), one object (concrete watering trough), one contributing site (the irrigated hayfields and pastures surrounding the depot) and two non-contributing structures (fueling station and loading ramp). Although originally nominated for its significance as a historic mule breeding and packing ranch for the U.S. Forest Service, the depot is also important as the site of early smokejumping training activities.

Of these four parts of the proposed landmark, the U.S. Forest Service Remount Depot (1933) and the airfield (1948-49) have experienced very little change since their inception. As with

almost all CCC camps, the Stony Creek and Grand Menard sites were never meant to be permanent, and workers dismantled them when they closed in 1940s and 1950s. However, the original layout of the camps, the road systems that serviced them, and scattered foundations that characterized both CCC history and the early smokejumping program remain. At the Grand Menard site, just a few physical remnants of the smokejumping training features are still visible, in particular two pits that lay under practice jump structures.

Setting: The setting and location of the Ninemile Smokejumping Training Site NHL played an important role in its history. The four portions of the proposed landmark lie near the junction of Remount Road and Ninemile Road, about four miles northwest of Interstate 90 and Huson, Montana. Ninemile Road follows Ninemile Creek which empties into the Clark Fork River where the valley widens into verdant meadows suitable for grazing and haying. Between the Clark Fork River and the Remount Depot, the gently undulating topography along the drainage alternates between grassy and brushy areas and forest groves. At the base of the Ninemile Divide and above Ninemile Creek, the depot sits in a cleared area with an irrigated hayfield to the west and pasture on its other sides. Contiguous to these fields just over 1 mile to the northwest, the airfield cuts through an open pasture and hayfield along a ridge above Stony Creek. In the mountains that rise north of the depot sit the two CCC camps on ponderosa pine-forested slopes. This setting directly enhanced training of early aerial fire fighters. Open areas served as practice jump sites and the landing strip, and forests provided opportunity for physical conditioning and simulated fire exercises. Significantly, the collective training sites at Ninemile existed next to a transportation corridor which facilitated the rapid deployment of fire fighters. Along the Clark Fork River, only about 4 miles away, ran the major highway into Idaho and two railroads. Twenty miles to the east, Missoula's Hale Airport serviced the only mountain flight company, Johnson Flying Service, which transported Forest Service parachutists between 1939 and 1954.

**Ninemile Remount Depot (now Ninemile Ranger District)**:
At the center of the proposed landmark is the Ninemile Ranger Station of the Lolo National Forest, which served as the U.S. Forest Service Remount Depot between 1933 and 1954. Located at the intersection of Ninemile and Remount Roads, a 9.6 acre complex of 12 buildings and 4 structures sits in a grove of well-watered deciduous (red maple, aspen, apple, cottonwood) and ponderosa pine trees and green lawn surrounded by pasture and hayfields. A white-painted pole fence separates the complex from Ninemile Road. Although two residences face Ninemile Road, most of the buildings orient toward an oval-shaped drive and parking area accessed through two gate posts from Remount Road. This district was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1980. A later report by Historical Research Associates for the Lolo National Forest recommended adding to the historic district a 1938 residence and garage located 1/3 mile north along Edith Peak Road, a 1933 powder house sitting approximately 1 mile east, and the pastures west and north of the main complex. This increases the number of contributing buildings to 15.[1]

Historic Appearance: In 1930, the Northern Region (One) of U.S. Forest Service leased the "old Allen ranch" along the Ninemile Creek from Ralph and Yvonne Scheffer to serve as a central supply depot for pack mules needed in region-wide fire fighting. From 1930 to 1933 the Forest Service employees operated from the wood-frame buildings on the ranch. In 1933, the agency, with Civilian Conservation Corps labor, undertook a program to completely rebuild the depot. By 1935, the workers had erected thirteen wood-frame buildings, two entrance gate posts, a scale for weighing pack strings, a ramp to load mules into trucks, and the corrals to the east of the buildings. The CCC men also built fences, cleared pastures, irrigated hay fields at the depot, and improved the road between the depot and Highway 10.[2] (*See historic photos #1-2*)

The structures at the depot exhibited the Cape Cod style, a version of colonial revival popular during the 1930s and used often by New Deal designers. To create uniformity of appearance, carpenters covered the wood-frame structures with drop or lap siding painted white, installed multi-paned, sash windows, and laid green shingled roofs. Designers centered the buildings on a grassy and treed oval around which ran a circular driveway. In general, the offices and residences lay to the north and west of the oval and the work structures sat east and south of it. Although all the buildings exhibited consistent architectural details, drop siding distinguished the work buildings from the lap-sided residences and offices. (*Photo 1*)

Present Appearance: The U.S. Forest Service Remount Depot has changed relatively little since its period of significance, 1933 to 1954. The Forest Service has faithfully maintained the complex in its original design and architectural style although the agency has renovated some interiors as their uses have changed. The following are descriptions of the district's buildings and alterations and a sketch map of their locations that accompanied the original National Register nomination. (Numbers 1-17 refer to Sketch Map 1 from original nomination.)

1. Entrance Gates: Two white, lap-sided, square piers with green wood-shingled hip roofs and decorative brackets demarcate either side of the entrance into the Remount Depot. At some point, the entrance posts were reconstructed and repositioned. (*Photo 2*)

2. Scales: On the south side of the barn sits a concrete pad now covered with wood. Mules originally stood on this platform to be weighed. A white, wood-sided frame with a small, braced shed roof lies behind the platform and shelters the actual scales, which are visible behind the 9-light fixed window. (*Photo 3*)

3. The drop-sided, wood-frame, L-shaped, one-and-a-half-story barn has a dominant green, wood-shingled gambrel roof and lower intersecting gable roof. It sits on a concrete foundation. Roof details include metal roof ventilators and weathervanes on the gambrel roof, exposed rafter ends, and shed dormers with 4-light windows. The elevations under the gambrel ends contain double, braced, sliding doors on the first and second (hay loft) stories and small, symmetrically-

placed, 4-light windows on either side of the door. Above these doors, the gambrel roof extends to support winches needed to lift hay into the upper floor. On ground level, concrete pads front each end's doors. Windows in the structure are 4-lights either singly or in triplicate. On the north elevation, exterior wooden stairs and balustrade access the upper half story in the gabled wing. A central, concrete-floored aisle runs through the barn. Wood-framed stalls lie on either side. The eastern most of these have half walls and braced, "Dutch" doors. (*Photos 4-6*)

4. Loading Ramp: Consisting of treated timbers stacked in a U-shape and filled with earth, this structure allowed easy loading of mules into trucks. This may be a relatively new structure, as the 1979 sketch map situated the loading ramp adjacent to the stud barn. (*Photo 7*)

5. The stud or stallion barn is a smaller version of the district's main barn. Rectangular-shaped with a new, wood-shingled gambrel roof, this white, drop-sided, wood-frame, one-and-a-half-story building sits on a concrete foundation. Small ventilators with weather vanes and exposed rafter ends grace its roof. It features single, 4-light windows in its long elevations. Under each extended gambrel end are double, sliding, braced doors on the ground and loft levels, with the ground level doors featuring divided, "Dutch" doors. (*Photo 8-9*)

6. Saddle Shop: This one-story, rectangular, wood-frame, drop-sided structure with an asphalt-shingled gable roof has a central door and symmetrical 6-light windows under the gable end. Exposed rafter ends exist under the eaves. Windows in all elevations are 6/6 sashes or fixed 6-lights. A wooden deck about 3 feet high projects from the east side of the facade. A small, shed-roofed storage cupboard is attached next the rear elevation's central entrance. Two wooden hitching posts sit in front of the building. (*Photo 10*)

7. Blacksmith's Shop: Apparently moved to this location in 1938, this one-story, rectangular, wood-frame, drop-sided, asphalt-shingled, gable-roofed structure has exposed rafter ends under the eaves. It features triple 6-light windows on the south side and 8-lights on the west and north and rests on a concrete foundation. Its gable-end facade contains large, sliding, braced, double doors, two 8-light windows, and a wooden ramp into the building. (*Photo 11*)

8. Corrals: To the west of the work buildings lay a system of pole corrals. Various gates within the system feature heavier posts and cross arms. The loading chute is a notable feature of the corrals. Made of poles, cross-armed frames, and wooden siding, the chute rises about foot off the ground. A light pole stands next to it. (*Photo 12-13*)

9. Garage: Originally a 30'x94' structure included in the 1980 U.S. Forest Service Remount Depot nomination, it burnt in 1982, and no traces remain. (*Photo 14*)

10. Visitor Center/Classroom: Previously used as a garage/truck maintenance shop, the District's engineering offices, and a classroom, this one-story, 80-foot rectangular, wood-frame, drop-sided structure features a wood-shingled gable roof with exposed rafter ends and four gable-roofed dormers containing 6-light windows. It has a concrete foundation. Windows consist of pairs of 1/1 sashes on the south, single 1/1 sashes on the north, and a small 4-light. Lap-sided porch posts support a gable roof and fan light over the main entrance on the west end of the building. A 4-light door accesses the front porch. Sometime after 1979, the building became a visitor center open during the summer months. (*Photo 15*)

11. Timber/Fire Office: Originally a bunkhouse, this one-story, rectangular, wood-frame, lap-sided building has a wood-shingled, gable roof with a porch recessed under the extended side gable. Square posts support the porch on a wood deck. Two gabled dormers extend from the front side gable. In them, air conditioners currently sit below 6-light windows. Pairs of 6/6 sash windows flank a central door with a 4-light window. Eaves are flush with the roof. Elevation windows are 6/6 sashes. The east side has an entrance with concrete steps. (*Photo 16*)

12. Ranger/Resource Office: Originally the cook house, this one-story structure now serves as the ranger's and resource office. Probably once nearly identical to the Timber/Fire office building, at some point it received a 15'x15' rear addition that served as a mess hall. It is an L-shaped, wood-frame, lap-sided building with a wood-shingled, dominant side-gable roof. The addition's gable roof intersects with the front, side-gable roof. It rests on a concrete foundation which opens to an exterior basement door on the north side. An extended side gable roof forms a recessed porch supported by square posts on a wooden deck. Two gabled dormers with 6/6 sash windows extend from the front side gable. Eaves are flush with the roof. The building has two entries in the facade, both with doors containing 6-light windows. Storm doors protect these entries. Windows are 6/6 sashes. (*Photo 17*)

13. Residence: Originally the Remount Depot Supervisor's residence, this one-and-a-half story, irregularly-shaped house sits in a prominent location at the entrance of the station and the intersection of Remount and Ninemile roads. Resting on a concrete foundation, it is a wood-frame, lap-sided structure with wood-shingled, intersecting gable roofs. Eaves are flush with the roof. Its facade features a recessed porch with square porch posts that faces south under an extended side gable. In the roof above it are three gabled dormers containing 6/6 sash windows. Another such dormer faces north. Windows are 6-light sashes. The west elevation contains a single-bay garage. The rear gabled wing features a small recessed porch with square posts and rear entry under an extended side gable. A wing on the east has a lower gable roof intersecting the main structure and 6/1 sash windows framed by green shutters. (*Photos 18-20*)

14. Residence: Originally the district ranger's office, this one-and-a-half story house became a 4-bedroom residence in 1959. Sitting on a concrete foundation, this rectangular, wood-frame, lap sided dwelling has a wood-shingled, gable roof containing two gabled dormers. Eaves are flush with the roof. Its facade features a porch with square posts recessed under the extended side gable and sits on a wooden deck. A central entry accesses the dwelling. Windows are 6/1 sashes with no shutters, multi-paned basement windows, and large, fixed single panes in both the south and north elevations. On the rear (north) elevation in front of the door, a wooden deck and balustrade have been added below the large fixed light. The "picture windows" were probably added in the 1959 renovation. (*Photos 21-22*)

15. Residence: This one-and-a-half story structure has a virtually identical plan to the former Remount Depot Supervisor's residence. Both face Ninemile Road at opposite ends of the station. Between them, a grove of deciduous trees shelters a picnic table and log-sided play house. The dwelling is an irregularly-shaped, wood-frame, lap-sided structure with wood-shingled, intersecting gable roofs. Eaves are flush with the roof. Its facade features a recessed porch with square porch posts and faces south under an extended side gable. In the roof above it are three gabled dormers containing 6/6 sash windows. Another such dormer faces north. Windows are 6-light sashes and those on the west side feature green shutters. The west elevations contain a single-bay garage. The rear gabled wing features a small recessed porch with square posts and balustrade under an extended side gable. A wing on the east has a lower gable roof intersecting the main structure and 6/1 sash windows. (*Photo 23*)

16. Garage: Resting on a concrete foundation, this rectangular, wood-framed, drop-sided garage has an asphalt-shingled gable roof and exposed rafter ends. Facing east, four braced doors of tongue-in-groove bead board with 6-light windows open up four garage bays. The south elevation contains an entry door and three 12-light sash windows (probably 6/6 windows positioned horizontally). (*Photo 24*)

HRA historians working on contract for the Forest Service Region 1 office recommended adding the following structures to the 1980 National Register nomination. (*Numbers 17-18, 20 refer to Map 2, a copy of USGS map that accompanied HRA's report.*)

17. Foreman's Dwelling and Garage: Constructed in 1938 1/3 mile north of the complex, the foreman's house is a rectangular, one-story, wood-frame, lap-sided dwelling resting on a concrete foundation. It has an asphalt-shingled gable roof with intersecting gable roof over the porch and a lower gabled wing to the north. Round posts rise from the wood deck to support the lap-sided porch gable. An entry with one-light door accesses the porch roof. Windows are 6/6 sashes. (*Photo 25-27*)

The garage is a small, rectangular, drop-sided, wood-frame structure with an asphalt-shingled, gable roof and exposed rafter ends and a single garage bay.

18. Powder House and powder magazine: Excerpted from the HRA report: "The powder house is located approximately one mile east of the main building complex within an isolated 40-acre parcel of federal land. It is a one story, masonry bearing buildings with a rectangular floor plan, reported to have been built in 1933. It lies on a concrete wall foundation which contains screened vents in two of its sides. Walls are constructed of brick. The wood frame gable ends are covered with corrugated metal. Two, large, circular, aluminum vents sit atop the corrugated metal cover, gable roof. The building contains a heavy iron door in the southwest elevation. Stenciled on two sides of the building are the words, "Danger High Explosives."

"In addition to the powder house this parcel contains a small powder magazine. This consists of a four foot section of steel culvert bermed on the top and sides with earth and cobble and boulder sized rocks. A steel door is welded to the south end of the culvert. This appears to be a fairly new structure."[3]

19. Pasture: HRA recommended adding the area between the foreman's dwellings and the depot and the pastures to the west of the depot to the district.[4] (See Alberton USGS Map.) (*Photos 28-29*)

Additional Features of the U.S. Forest Service Remount Depot not noted in earlier reports:

20. Foreman's Shed: Situated to the north of the house, this small, one-story, wood-frame, drop-sided structure has an asphalt-shingled gable roof with exposed rafter ends. It has a 6-light window and paneled door. A small, ventilated, gable-roofed box sits in front of the shed. (*Photo 25*)

21. Fueling Station: Located to the west of the corrals and behind the visitors' center, this structure is of indeterminate age. The 1979 nomination by Elaine Howard and Charles McLeod does not mention it. It

is a one-story, rectangular, wood-frame, lap sided structure with an asphalt-shingled gabled roof. The east side gable extends to form a wing that features individual numbered metal doors to the exterior. The west wing has an interior corridor with doors and a recessed porch. The gable end extends from the south facade over a concrete deck. Square wooden posts and trusses support the extended roof. Concrete steps descend on either side of the deck. A central entry accesses the building. Two irregular windows exist above the door in the gable end. A shed addition with chain link wire doors covers the rear (north elevation). The new-looking concrete foundation and plywood soffits suggest this is a recent building. Fuel tanks sit along a wooden deck behind the building. (See Map 3, from Ninemile Ranger Station website.) (*Photo 30*)

22. Concrete Drinking Trough: North of the stud barn at the corner of the corrals opposite the saddle shop is a round, concrete drinking trough. It appears to be CCC built. (See Map 3, from Ninemile Ranger Station website.) (*Photo 31*)

23. Outhouse: To the north of the saddle shop in a clump of lilac bushes is a green outhouse. It is a rectangular, wood-framed structure with a single, paneled door and vent. Directly opposite the existing outhouse and north of the stud barn is a small concrete foundation. Half of it is a slab and the other half is a hole covered with wood. Lilac bushes shade the site. It appears to be a mirror of the existing outhouse. (See Map 3, from Ninemile Ranger Station website.) (*Photos 32-33*)

Integrity: Despite the loss of a garage and the addition of a compatible contemporary building, the U.S. Forest Service Remount Depot retains excellent integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

**Stony Creek Civilian Conservation Corps Camp**: What remains of the Stony Creek CCC camp lies 3 miles north of the U.S. Forest Service Remount Depot on Butler Creek Road (which branches off of Edith Peak Road) and immediately east of Stony Creek. Located close to Stony Creek in what was once a large, open area, this site lies on a gentle slope of scattered ponderosa pines surrounded by denser forest. (See Map 4, Stony Creek CCC Camp F-36.)

Historic Appearance: Constructed in 1933, Stony Creek CCC Camp F-36 housed three companies of young men. Located with the purpose of supplying workers to rebuild the Remount Depot, the camp was situated close to it in a cleared, relatively level opening. Although it was the largest CCC camp in the nation with 600 men, the camp layout followed a pattern typical of camps meant to be semi-permanent. A central drive separated the camps into two sections. To the west sat the administrative buildings which included the commander's house at the northern-most end of the oval drive surrounding the administrative area and buildings used for work spaces, garages, and parking areas. On the east side of the drive lay three rows of five or six barracks each. A road around the periphery produced a square shape to this portion of the camp. Walkways bordered with piled rocks transected the administrative and living areas. At the intersection of the main road entering the camp that bisected the administrative and living areas, workers erected a gate of peeled poles and a sign welcoming visitors to "Nine Mile Camp." Beside the gate, between the road and the barracks, what looked like white-painted rocks arranged a larger, more visible "Welcome." All buildings within the camp were one-story, rectangular, wood-framed structures with gable roofs, vertical board and batten siding, and either concrete slab or rubble rock foundations. In 1939, workers began to dismantle the Stony Creek camp, leaving structures to support only one company of men. The eastern rows of barracks were removed first. At the same time, Grand Menard CCC camp arose closer to the Remount Depot, approximately 2 miles south of Stony

Creek camp on Edith Peak Road. Corps men possibly moved some of the Stony Creek structures to the new site. In 1941, CCC activities in Stony Creek ceased, and the burgeoning smokejumper training program occupied the remaining structures, most likely those on the western side of the camp. (A photo dated 1941 shows only 3 barracks and possibly a wash house remaining in the eastern, barracks side of the camp.) Smokejumpers and fire fighters used the camp until 1942. In July that year, Congress officially closed all CCC camps. By fall 1943, Stony Creek camp's remaining 14 buildings (5 barracks, two bath houses, a cook and mess hall, storage buildings, a shop, creation hall, and officers' quarters) were sold and removed. After a single year at nearby Seeley Lake, smokejumping training then moved to Grand Menard. By 1945, Stony Creek contained no buildings or structures although the distinctive roadways and at least three foundations clearly remained.[5] (*See historic photos #3-4.*)

Present Appearance: Though no buildings remain at Stony Creek, the site still conveys its history as a CCC and early smokejumper training camp. The layout of roads is evident with a central drive dividing the two camp regions, a circling drive that once surrounded the administrative area, and the northern and southern lateral driveways that defined the barracks portion of the camp. Rocks piled by CCC recruits still line the edges of these roadways. Near the camp's entrance, Boy Scouts have reconstructed a log entrance gate. In a flat area at the northern-most point of the administrative district sits the site's only structure, a stone chimney and fireplace of uncoursed, uncut stone that once served the camp commander's residence. The 6'x8' chimney rises above a 7.5'x10.5' base and features a semi-elliptical arched opening and keystone. Fire brick and concrete line its interior. To the south of the chimney lay the remains of the administrative area. These include outlines of rock-lined walkways, stone foundations, and numerous pits. Once a cleared field, the site still has grassy areas but in places new trees have pushed up through the pits and rubble. A few small concrete pads and foundations still exist among the trees; some are jumbled and broken with foliage growing in them. To the north of the chimney, behind the residence site, are more partially-submerged, rock-lined paths, trenches, and possible foundations. (*See photos #34-41*)

The barracks site more clearly conveys its original use. Here, a mostly open hillside with a few trees contains the remnants of the camp. On the southern end lie three, poured concrete foundations. Trees and shrubs have broken the slabs that sit on 2- or 3-foot walls so that each has collapsed in the middle. To the north of these foundations is a grassy field where evidence of the stone-lined paths that connected the buildings remains. Flattened areas clearly reveal the former placement of barracks. Several pits exist among the building sites and partially submerged walkways. Though these are all that remain of the barracks, numerous broken concrete slabs and pipes are strewn around the overgrown areas in the northern end of the camp. Some of these features appear to have been associated with the water system as they consist of 5'x3' concrete boxes containing iron or ceramic pipes. North of the eastern-most row of barracks is an iron-lined, 4-foot, circular pit with a half-round pipe on either side. Metal bracing once covered its top but is now misshapen from the stones that have been dumped into the pit. The northern-most roadway into the barracks area ends at a rubble stone hearth. (*See photos #42-59*)

Integrity: The Stony Creek CCC camp site exhibits some features of a recognizable CCC camp and early smokejumper training site. It retains its location within the Lolo National Forest north of the Remount Depot—built by the Stony Creek CCC workers—and near its successor camp, Grand Menard. The present setting is much the same as the camp's historic setting although reforestation of the administrative section in particular has occurred. Its design as a semi-permanent camp is evident in the defining roadways, the rock-lined walkways throughout both parts of the camp, the open hillside with recognizable barracks sites, and the scattered concrete foundations. Overall, the site retains its feeling and association as an impermanent, forest camp where young

men learned basic woodcraft, construction skills, and fire fighting techniques, including smokejumping. Most lacking in integrity are the qualities of workmanship and materials. Although the overall design of the camp is still visible, the loss of the buildings greatly diminishes the ability of the site to convey early smokejumper training activities. No distinct features can be directly associated with these activities. The site does not meet the NHL requirement of a high degree of integrity.

**Grand Menard Civilian Conservation Corps Camp**: The remnants of this camp are evident in a Forest Service picnic area one mile north of the Ninemile Ranger District on Edith Peak Road. Located a short distance from the road, the site sits on a distinctly oval-shaped, flat area.

Historic Appearance: Constructed in 1939-1940, Grand Menard CCC camp looked quite different than the Stony Creek camp. A 1941 map of intended landscaping showed the camp's plan. Considered "a permanent fixed type" with 23 buildings, its design centered on an open, grassy oval onto which the surrounding buildings faced. A roadway circumscribed the oval and buildings. The layout divided the camp into zones. On the southeastern, long side of the oval lay the administration buildings. Opposite them sat the five barracks buildings and the lavatory. A laundry operated further to the west of the barracks, outside the oval. In a prominent position at the north end of the oval was the large, T-shaped, mess hall. Work buildings, such as garages, shops, and a fueling station existed in a contained area off the southwestern edge of the oval. All buildings appear to have been one-story, rectangular, wood-frame, gable roofed structures with horizontal wood siding and multi-paned windows. The positioning of the Army office displayed the central importance of the military to the CCC. As visitors entered the camp's central driveway around a landscaped boulevard, they were funneled directly to the office, the only structure that lay inside the grassy oval. Architects carefully landscaped the site, planning for trees and shrubs around the buildings. These indicate the intended permanency of the camp. (*See historic photo #5*)

Beyond the work area, approximately 220 yards south at the end of a road leaving the camp, lay a creosote treatment pit. From an earthen dock supported by a concrete bulkhead, a boom apparently unloaded poles from trucks into tanks of creosote.

Grand Menard was one of the last camps constructed and operated by the CCC, ending its period as a CCC facility in 1943. At that point, partial dismantling began. Fourteen buildings were disassembled and sent to the Alaska-Canada highway construction. Smokejumpers used the remaining eight buildings, including the mess hall and some of the barracks, as a centralized training facility. Apparently, the Forest Service intended for Menard to serve as a "permanent" smokejumping training facility. This required specialized structures and equipment. In 1943, on a small, treeless bench at the south end of Camp Menard, workers built a parachute loft—a rectangular, gable-roofed, wood-framed building with multi-paned windows needed to house the long tables where fire fighters carefully folded their parachutes into packs. Workers may have cobbled together this structure with buildings taken from Stony Creek CCC camp or a barracks building moved from the Camp Remini CCC camp near Helena about 1945. On the open, level area below the loft, foresters erected a practice jump tower of braced, peeled logs supporting a partially balustraded deck. A wooden ramp ran from the hillside up to the jump tower. Beside the tower was a pole with a boom and pulley system that attached to the man's parachute harness. Trainees leaped from a simulated door onto a rope net stretched across a wooden frame that broke their fall above a sawdust-filled pit. By 1952, the jump tower featured closed sides and an additional deck and simulated door above the first deck. Next to the high tower was a shorter jump consisting of a pole frame above a raised rope net that lay across another pit of sawdust to cushion the jumper's drop. Two ramps also

facilitated training; one was simply a raised wooden deck with a ramp and the other was a steep, wooden ramp supported by poles. Near them were short posts embedded in the ground. Fire fighters placed their legs into loops attached to these posts and did back bends from them. Other obstacle course training equipment included wooden horizontal bars, a log featuring a "v" trough to strengthen ankles, and a pole frame from which trainees hung suspended. Two "mock-ups" provided practice in properly exiting an airplane. These consisted of small, wood-frame structures, one with the rounded openings and windows of a Ford Tri-motor airplane. A 1941 photo shows the "high-line" poles and cables from which suspended a "drop-rig" used to practice let-downs from tree landings near the jump tower, but in 1944 it appears to be located behind the loft and training ground. As part of their conditioning, trainees established a system of running trails around the area. (*See historic photos #6-17*)

Present Appearance: Sometime after 1954, when the smokejumper training program moved to Missoula, the Forest Service removed all the structures at Grand Menard. Gradually, the area reforested so that now the formerly open training site sits within a predominantly ponderosa pine forest. At a later time, the agency transformed Grand Menard into a public picnic area. This required little alteration. On the level, central ground, the Forest Service placed concrete tables and benches, grills, horseshoe pits, and fire pits mostly grouped inside the north and south end of the oval near new "sweet smelling toilets." Still clearly visible are the roads and paths that constituted the oval's boundaries and the flattened areas where buildings stood. Walkways are still partially visible. Particularly noticeable are the places where slab foundations existed on the west side of the camp. The old laundry site contains the only physical remains of the camp. Beside a large pit rests a roughly 21'x40' crumbling concrete foundation, jumbled rocks, and remnants of a water system. (*See photos #60-65*)

Although the parachute loft building is gone, an approximately 50'x150' flattened area on a small bench just southwest of the picnic area demarcates its location. Below the hill, among the pine trees, lay the two pits that probably held sawdust under the practice jumps. (Photos seem to confirm this observation.) Most likely originally under the jump tower, the western-most pit is deepest, measuring about 3 feet deep, and 10'x11' in dimension. The smaller, (9x10 feet) shallower pit is 2 feet deep and was probably associated with the lower jump. A level area surrounds the pits, which echoes the original training field. However, rather than an open, grassy place, pine trees grow up throughout the pits and old camp and along the hillsides. (*See photos #66-71*)

Other features associated with the smokejumper training program that remain are the creosote pit and the visible portions of a running trail. The creosote pit still exists at the end of the road leading from the camp. Below the concrete bulkhead are the concrete surrounds for the round tanks.[6] (*See photos #72-74*)

Integrity: Significantly altered since its 1943-54 period of significance, the Grand Menard CCC camp and smokejumper training center does not exhibit sufficient historic integrity to be eligible for NHL status. It does strongly retain its location, design, and setting. It remains in the Lolo National Forest near the U.S. Forest Service Remount Depot, the Ninemile Airfield, and the Forest Service facilities and airport in Missoula. Its location reflects its purposes as both a conservation camp and a forest fire fighting training area. Although the buildings are gone, the camp's original CCC design is still visible through the existing roads, the oval configuration of the picnic ground, the flat foundation spaces, and the laundry building remnants. However, these features convey little of the history of the early smokejumper program. More problematic are the significant visual changes to the area mostly associated with smokejumper training. Reforestation has compromised the original open setting and the sight line between the parachute loft/training area and the camp. Feeling and association are thus compromised by

the loss of the buildings and new vegetative growth. Design and workmanship are almost totally lost, as few physical constructions remain. Although evidence of the training grounds remain—the pits, the trails, and scattered artifacts of the smokejumper area—it is not enough to meet the NHL requirement of a high degree of integrity.

**Ninemile Airfield**: Constructed by the U.S. Forest Service in 1948-49, the airfield is situated just over 1 mile northwest of the Remount Depot on Ninemile Road. A flood-irrigated hayfield used by the Ninemile Ranger District lies between the station and airfield providing a visual connection between the station, hayfields, and pastures.

Historic Appearance: Located in an open pasture and hayfield on the east side of the Stony Creek drainage, the airfield was a leveled strip approximately 2,100 feet long and 200 feet wide running on a north-south axis. Because it lay on slightly sloped terrain above the pasture, workers created a small cut on the uphill side and a small berm on the downhill side of the strip to produce a fairly smooth, flat landing area suitable for small planes. In places, jumbled rocks delineated the downhill edge, and a few pine trees existed along the upper cut. (*See historic photos #18-19*)

Present Appearance: Still used by smokejumper trainees today for practice jumps, the airfield has sustained no significant alterations. It retains excellent historic integrity. (*See photo #72*)

**List of Contributing and Non-Contributing Resources in Proposed Ninemile Smokejumper Training Sites NHL:**

Ninemile Airfield: Contributing Site
U.S. Forest Service Remount Depot: Contributing District
- 15 Contributing Buildings
- 4 Contributing Structures
- 1 Contributing Object
- 2 Contributing Sites
- 1 Non-Contributing Building
- 1 Non-Contributing Structure

Stony Creek CCC Camp: Non-Contributing Site due to lack of integrity
Grand Menard CCC Camp: Non-Contributing Site due to lack of integrity

ENDNOTES

[1] "Forest Service Region One Administrative Facilities Inventory Addendum Sheet for Ninemile Ranger Station, 24M0300, Lolo NF," copy received from Montana State Historic Preservation Office, Helena, MT.

[2] Katy Schneid Hampton, "A Brief History of the Ninemile Remount Depot," unpublished reported prepared for Historical Research Associates, Inc., Missoula, Montana, 1993; "HABS/HAER

Inventory: Ninemile Remount Depot;" "National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form: U.S. Forest Service Remount Depot," 1979, all copies received from Montana State Historic Preservation Office, Helena, MT.

[3] "Forest Service Region One Administrative Facilities Inventory." As we did not visit this non-contiguous site, we have excerpted the description from the above report.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Photos of Stony Creek and Grand Menard CCC camps from Stan Cohen, A Pictorial History of Smokejumping (Missoula: Pictorial Histories Publishing Co., 1983) and Stan Cohen, The Tree Army: A Pictorial History of the Civilian Conservation Corps, 1933-1942 (Missoula: Pictorial Histories Publishing Co., 1980).

[6] Erika Karuzas, Recreation Specialist and archaeologist at Ninemile Ranger District, found and identified the smokejumping training sites, including the loft building site, the jump pits, and the location of the obstacle course. She also identified the running paths currently used by smokejumpers and perhaps constructed by trainees while living at Grand Menard. Her knowledge of the area, of the Forest Service, of the history of the U.S. Forest Service Remount Depot, and of smokejumper training, both historic and contemporary, was invaluable. It is her archaeological research that appears on the accompanying site maps. We thank her for her generous and enthusiastic support.

## 8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:
Nationally: X Statewide: _ Locally:

Applicable National
Register Criteria: A X B_ C_ D_

Criteria Considerations
(Exceptions): A_B_C_D_E_F_G

NHL Criteria: Criterion 1

NHL Theme(s):
Theme V: Developing the American economy
subtheme 3 (transportation and communication)
subtheme 4 (workers and work culture)

Theme VI: Expanding Science and Technology
subtheme 1 (experimentation and invention)

Theme VII: Transforming the Environment
subtheme 3 (protecting and preserving the environment).

Theme IV: Shaping the political landscape
subtheme 1 (parties, protests, and movements)
subtheme 3 (military institutions and activities)

Areas of Significance: Conservation

Period(s) of Significance: 1941-1954

Significant Dates: 1944-1945

Significant Person(s):

Cultural Affiliation:

Architect/Builder:

Historic Contexts: American Aviation Heritage; World War II and the American Home Front

**State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.**

Summary

Although identified in the theme study, *American Aviation Heritage: Identifying and Evaluating Nationally Significant Sites in U.S. Aviation History,* the proposed Ninemile Smokejumper Training Sites NHL, which includes the U.S. Forest Service Remount Depot, two former Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camp sites, and a backcountry airfield site, is ineligible for National Historic Landmark status because it lacks the high level of physical integrity required for NHL designation. Two of the associated sites, the airfield and remount depot district, exhibit excellent integrity. However, the sites most central to smokejumper training between 1941 and 1954, the Stony Creek camp and Camp Menard, retain only traces of the landscape, training apparatus, and buildings that would convey the history of early aerial firefighting. In particular, these two fundamental sites have lost or have a compromised integrity of setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and therefore do not meet the NHL stipulation of "high level of integrity." As a result, the researchers who prepared this form, the NPS review staff, and external reviewers concurred that the proposed Ninemile Smokejumper Training Sites NHL does not meet the requirements for NHL listing.[1]

Despite the lack of a high level of physical integrity at Stony Creek and Camp Menard, the proposed Ninemile Smokejumper Training Sites NHL should be recognized as nationally significant under National Historic Landmark (NHL) criterion 1 as a group of properties associated with events that have made important contributions to the broad national patterns of American history. At these associated locations, the Forest Service experimented with and eventually accepted as standard procedure the modern strategy of aerial firefighting using smokejumpers, which transformed the nature of backcountry firefighting after World War II. The collection of sites at Ninemile is important in two related contexts: the aviation context for the period 1941to 1954 and the World War II home front context from 1944 to1945. The history of the group of training sites must be considered in both contexts to understand fully their collective national significance.

The three relevant NHL themes for Ninemile related to the development of general aviation in the United States are theme V (developing the American economy), subtheme 3 (transportation and communication); theme VI (expanding science and technology), subtheme 1 (experimentation and invention); and theme VII (transforming the environment), subtheme 3 (protecting and preserving the environment). Ninemile is included in the list of general aviation sites recommended for preliminary study as potential NHLs in the theme study, *American Aviation Heritage: Identifying and Evaluating Nationally Significant Sites in U.S. Aviation History.*[2] The site description in the theme study claims that Camp Menard was the first training area for Forest Service smokejumpers. However, the significance of Camp Menard and its related sites must be considered within the larger matrix of Forest Service sites within Regions 1 and 6 that contributed to the inauguration and early training of aerial firefighters in the twentieth century. These include the North Cascades Smokejumper Base in Winthrop, Washington, the

[1] Note: Final confirmation of determination of ineligibility due to lack of integrity at the two CCC camp sites confirmed via email to the authors on April 15, 2009, by Caridad de la Vega, Historian, National Historic Landmarks Program, National Park Service.

[2] Susan Cianci Salvatore, Laura Shick, Caridad de la Vega, Roger E. Bilstein, Janet Bednarek, and John D. Anderson, *American Aviation Heritage: Identifying and Evaluating Nationally Significant Sites in U.S. Aviation History [Draft NHL Theme Study]* (National Park Service, June 2006), 569.

Seeley Lake Ranger Station in Seeley Lake, Montana, the Moose Creek Ranger Station in Idaho, and the Aerial Fire Depot in Missoula.

Although the Ninemile sites are not the only extant sites from the early history of aerial firefighting and several lack physical integrity, they should be recognized as nationally significant because of the development and use of backcountry infrastructure— including the modified CCC camps, airfield, and training facilities. Together they formed the critical chapter that advanced the development of smokejumper crews for the Forest Service as a cost-saving alternative to ground-crew operations. World War II created a scarcity of funding, labor, and materials that threatened to end the smokejumping project in its infancy. Because the program made efficient use of former CCC camp sites and CPS labor, and contributed significantly to Forest Service activities at the remount depot, the program not only survived but grew significantly during the war. Without the existing facilities at Ninemile, their proximity to the remount depot, and the influx of labor from the Civilian Public Service (CPS), the smokejumping project would not have survived the war and flourished in its aftermath. Training and deployment of student firefighters, conscientious objectors, and veterans at Ninemile from 1941 to 1954 improved the Forest Service's ability to protect and preserve national forests during a time of rapid change and political opposition to the program.

Additionally, the historically linked sites at Ninemile illustrate the incomplete transition from animal to machine power in backcountry firefighting. The Forest Service's success with the use of airplanes and parachute drops of both equipment and people required sustained experimentation and innovation, and the Ninemile sites were important for those activities. The pioneers of aerial firefighting used the Ninemile facilities to field-test new equipment and training techniques, even as the jumpers continued to rely upon and support the mule pack strings and working ranch at the remount depot. As a result, the activities of the men who trained and worked as smokejumpers at Ninemile were part of a continuum of labor and technology, including firefighting, parachuting, logging, haying, ranching, and construction, that interlaced to profoundly affect the environment and conservation of natural resources in the region.

In addition to aviation history, the Ninemile sites are also significant in several areas within two themes related to the World War II home front.[3] These are theme V (developing the American economy) subtheme 4 (workers and work culture); theme IV (shaping the political landscape) subtheme 1 (parties, protests, and movements); and theme IV, subtheme 3 (military institutions and activities). In 1944 and 1945, conscientious objectors served the country at Ninemile as smokejumpers who also provided badly needed additional labor for the Forest Service. The physical and mental demands of smokejumping as a high-risk occupation gave the CPS smokejumpers an unusual opportunity to counter accusations about their patriotism and courage. Camp Menard (CPS Camp 103)—while a typical example of a military-style "controlled group camp" on the home front in some respects—contained a particularly rigorous training and service program that allowed the men to approximate the social rewards of military service while engaging in a "moral equivalent of war" that helped strengthen the wartime economy. Simultaneously, the Forest Service used the site to train military paratrooper units for active duty overseas as well as on the home front, which further blurred the boundary between the CPS smokejumper program and military service.

[3] Marilyn M. Harper, John W. Jeffries, William M. Tuttle, Jr., Nelson Lichtenstein, Harvard Sitkoff, *World War II and the American Home Front* (National Park Service, 2007).

Historic Context: American Aviation Heritage

*The Origins of Aerial Firefighting*

The federal government began aerial firefighting with visual and photographic surveys and cargo dropping twenty years before the first parachuting experiments. Just after World War I, the Army Air Service performed the first aerial forest fire patrols for the Forest Service in the western United States at the request of Chief Forester Henry S. Graves. Begun in California and later spreading to Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Montana, the aerial surveys supported existing fire prevention techniques during a period of inadequate appropriations.[4] This cooperative effort between the Army and the Forest Service established the foundation for a long-term partnership in which the two entities exchanged manpower, equipment, and aircraft in return for field experience and training.[5] From 1925 to 1935, aerial photography developed into a full-scale project within the Forest Service. At the same time, cargo dropping from planes became the accepted method for supplying backcountry firefighters, and early backcountry airstrips supported aviation experimentation. In 1934, T.V. Pearson of the Forest Service's Region 4 hired professional parachutists for the first experimental demonstration of transporting firefighters with parachutes. However, the agency offered no institutional support for the project, which was deemed too risky.[6] It was not until five years later, in 1939, that the first experimental jumps took place in Region 6 from Winthrop, Washington.[7]

From June 22 to July 3, 1940, Forest Service Regions 1 and 6 trained the first smokejumper crews at Winthrop and at Seeley Lake, Montana. The agency chose the ranger station at Seeley Lake because it was isolated from the public and other air traffic and was situated in topographical and vegetative conditions similar to field conditions found on actual fires. A Boy Scout camp across the lake offered housing for the trainees, and nearby Blanchard Flats (at Clearwater Junction) provided one square mile of open area for practice jumps. The training program was still highly experimental and rudimentary in that first season because the Forest Service had not yet developed full protocol, jump towers, or adequate safety procedures. Region 1 officials selected a small crew of seven men for the first training year and conducted standard physicals at Fort Missoula before sending the men to Seeley Lake. There, the crew improvised and quickly erected temporary facilities: three tents for living quarters and a parachute loft made from two 14- by 16-foot tents placed end-to-end. Training lasted only one week, and the Forest Service contracted Johnson Flying Service in Missoula to send a Travelaire NC 450N to the site each day for practice jumps.[8]

After the Region 1 crew completed training at Seeley Lake, the Forest Service sent the men to Moose Creek Ranger Station on the Nez Perce National Forest in Idaho for the 1940 summer fire season. There, they built the first permanent parachute loft—a shake roof supported with 4-inch posts over a board floor, with open sides (later closed with shakes) and a tower for hanging thirty-foot chutes at one end.[9] The crew faced a record year for small fires in the region. The first fire call came on July 12 at Martin

[4] *History of Smokejumping*, (Missoula: U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Forest Service, Northern Region, 1980), 1; Harold K. Steen, *The U.S. Forest Service: A History* (Durham, N.C.: Forest History Society in association with University of Washington Press, 2004), 176.
[5] *American Aviation Heritage theme study*, 171.
[6] *History of Smokejumping,* 1; see also Les Joslin, *Uncle Sam's Cabins: A Visitor's Guide to Historic U.S. Forest Service Ranger Stations of the West* (Bend, OR: Wilderness Associates, 1995), 31-33.
[7] *American Aviation Heritage*, 570.
[8] "Training, Region 1," National Smokejumper Association website, www. smokejumpers.com/history/training.php.; Earl Cooley, *Trimotor and Trail,* (Missoula: Mountain Press Publishing, 1984), 20-21; William Bolen interview transcript, 1984, OH 133-055, Mansfield Library, University of Montana.
[9] In Missoula, they were still packing parachutes in a federal building conference room. See *History of Smokejumping* draft, Mansfield Library Archives, University of Montana.

Creek on the Nez Perce. Piloted by Dick Johnson, a Travelaire plane carried Rufus Robinson and Earl Cooley, who made the first jump on a live fire that day, and Merle Lundigren, the project foreman who dropped the cargo. According to Earl Cooley, the first jump was not smooth—several minor mishaps occurred, any one of which could have ended the project if they had proved more serious or fatal. But they had the fire under control before the four-man trail crew arrived on horseback. They packed out the next morning riding horses with a Forest Service pack train of mules carrying their gear.[10] The Forest Service estimated that early intervention on fires during the 1940 season saved the agency about $30,000.[11]

*Creation of the Ninemile Remount Depot*

After this auspicious beginning, the Forest Service began planning for a permanent training facility for the smokejumper program. The Missoula area was the logical choice. As headquarters for Region 1, the first region created under Gifford Pinchot in 1908, the Forest Service operations in that area included all administrative offices, the Communications office, and the Northern Rocky Mountain Forest and Range Experiment Station. The Johnson Flying Service, based in Missoula, was the only contractor in the country with the expertise and airplanes capable of supporting the cutting-edge program. Additionally, the Forest Service had established a remount depot nearby at Ninemile Creek, a well-watered ranching landscape only 22 miles from Missoula. Due to the mechanization of agriculture in the first decades of the twentieth century, the quality of mule stock to support backcountry forest management and firefighting in particular had declined. In 1929, Regional Forester Evan Kelly and Clyde Fickes, both former Army cavalry officers with knowledge of military supply depots, proposed the creation of a dedicated Forest Service remount depot that would preserve and improve pack stock for the Forest Service.[12] In July, 1930, the agency leased the Allen ranch site at Ninemile and began planning the installation of irrigation, hayfields, and corrals to support the pack stock operation.[13] Existing ranch buildings served as temporary facilities while they planned the construction of permanent facilities.[14]

Building the remount depot required a large labor force and also provided a useful project for President Roosevelt's national work relief program, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). In 1933, the CCC established Camp F-36, often referred to as Camp Ninemile or Camp Stony Creek, about three miles north of the remount depot site on Stony Creek. The camp was large enough to house three CCC companies and consisted of 26 buildings as well as a mile and a quarter of service road for ditch construction crews and two miles of telephone line to the camp.[15]

In 1934, the Forest Service completed the purchase of the ranch and surrounding land, and the following year the CCC completed construction of thirteen buildings and corrals for the district ranger compound and remount depot. The Cape Cod-style buildings included a main barn, stallion barn, saddle shop, blacksmith shop, garage, maintenance shop, bunkhouse, cook house, residences for the depot supervisor, foreman, and district ranger, and outhouses. In addition to erecting the depot buildings, in 1935-1936 the F-36 men at Stony Creek fought fires, constructed fences, telephone lines, and truck trails, and

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[10] Cooley, *Trimotor and Trail,* 22-26.
[11] Ibid., 26-30.
[12] Milo McLeod, USDA Forest Service Region 1 archaeologist, interviewed by Janet Ore and Maren Bzdek, April 11, 2008, Missoula, Montana.
[13] "History of Ninemile Remount Depot" timeline, Ninemile Ranger District file; Montana Historical Society press release, April 22, 1980, "Ninemile Station Listed on National Register," Ninemile Ranger District files; Milo McLeod interview.
[14] "History of Ninemile Remount Depot" timeline, Ninemile Ranger District files.
[15] "National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form: U.S. Forest Service Remount Depot," 1979, copy received from Montana State Historic Preservation Office, Helena, MT; "Ninemile Camp Work is Rushed," *The Missoula Sentinel,* October 9, 1933.

undertook landscaping, surveys, re-vegetation, and ditch work.[16] The men also constructed cesspools, pipe lines, a reservoir, stone walls, and horse trails, and wildlife conservation projects.[17] By the spring of 1936, the Forest Service personnel at the depot had a fully operational breeding facility that could provide stock and pack saddles for firefighting in multiple regions of the Forest Service. The staff conducted range management experiments for the grazing pastures and irrigation for the surrounding hayfields that supported the mule stock.[18]

Like all CCC camps at the time, Camp Ninemile at Stony Creek was built as a temporary facility. In the fall of 1939, CCC laborers dismantled portions of Camp Ninemile and began construction of "a permanent fixed type" of camp two miles closer to the remount depot so that the CCC workers could continue soil cultivation, seeding, irrigation, haying, harvesting and storing crops, drafting, and sign making for Region 1.[19] The new CCC Camp F-81 became known as Camp Grand Menard, or simply Camp Menard, after a Forest Service stallion named Grand Menard.[20] The Missoula newspaper referred to it as "one of the most modern and pretentious camps in the district."[21] Completed by November, 1940 on a level site "in scattering timber," it remained vacant until the following spring. When the remaining CCC Company 1962 moved to Camp Menard in April, 1941, it left behind minimal facilities at Camp Ninemile to house the incoming smokejumper trainees from Regions 1 and 6. The CCC was shutting down the camps rapidly all over the nation as the War Department appropriated both labor and materials for the war effort. By June of 1942, all CCC operations had ceased.[22]

*Smokejumper Training at Stony Creek: 1941-1942*

After the experimental training year at Seeley Lake in 1940, the Forest Service moved smokejumper training to the remaining CCC buildings at Camp Ninemile on Stony Creek, in part because it was closer to the Johnson Flying Service in nearby Missoula. The Johnson brothers already had a close relationship with the Forest Service as the contractor for a variety of aerial services, including cargo dropping. They relied on Ford-Tri-Motors as the standard plane for transporting jump crews because of their sturdy landing gear, slow flying speed, and doors large enough for emerging jumpers and cargo. The Missoula area was already the base of air transportation for the three Forest Service regions and happened to be the geographic center of Region 1, which contained eight million roadless acres that could best be served by aerial support. Because the 1940 training at Seeley Lake had contributed to a successful fire fighting season, the Forest Service budgeted additional funding for the program.

In the 1941 training season at Camp Ninemile at Stony Creek, ground training was more systematic and intensive than it had been at Seeley Lake and incorporated athletic and military training methods, including calisthenics and a basic obstacle course. The men built a wooden jump tower that allowed them to experience the shock of impact from the release of a parachute. A dirt landing strip on private land at Sixmile, near Huson, served as a temporary airstrip for practice jumps that summer. The trainees lived in the remaining military-style CCC barracks, ate in the mess hall, and used the shared latrines and laundry just as the CCC men had before them. The Forest Service screened candidates more selectively

[16] "Company 1210 Reviews Accomplishments," *The Green Guidon,* December 1, 1935, 8, Ninemile Ranger District Files.
[17] 'Summary of Ninemile Work Projects," *The Green Guidon,* April 15, 1936, 13, Ninemile Ranger District Files.
[18] "Remount Station is Active Sector," *The Missoula Sentinel,* April 30, 1936.
[19] "New Grand Menard Camp Occupation," *The Missoula Sentinel,* April 12, 1941, 5; "Grand Menard CCC Camp has Many Projects," *The Missoula Sentinel,* undated—but part of series that began November 16, 1941.
[20] "New CCC Camp for Ninemile Region," *The Missoula Sentinel,* August 31, 1939.
[21] "New CCC Camps in Ninemile Built," *The Missoula Sentinel,* November 22, 1940.
[22] Alison T. Otis, William D. Honey, Thomas C. Hogg, and Kimberly K. Lakin, *The Forest Service and the Civilian Conservation Corps: 1933-42* (United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service FS-395, August 1986).

that year as well, although it limited them to Region 1 employees. Instead of sending trainees, regions 4 and 6 anticipated receiving support if necessary from the Region 1 smokejumpers. After the training period, one crew remained at the Ninemile camp for the fire season and additional crews set up base camps at Moose Creek, at the Cayuse landing field in the Clearwater National Forest, and at Big Prairie in the Flathead National Forest.[23]

The smokejumping experiment advanced in several key areas at Camp Ninemile at Stony Creek during the 1941 fire season. Crews continued to refine the use of the static line—originally fashioned from the same leather used to make mule halters at the depot—on the Ford Trimotors and Travelaires that carried jumpers to remote fires. Adapted to the Eagle backpacks used at the time, static lines automatically opened the parachute for the jumpers as they exited the plane, which relieved them of the responsibility for pulling their own rip cords. They refined and perfected this technique throughout the season and established a licensing examination for parachute riggers to further improve safety. Also that season, the rigging crew adapted a calf weening muzzle to serve as the first mesh mask on their modified football helmets and developed a disposable sleeping bag out of the paper wool sacks used on sheep ranches for nights at fire camps. While available for just one year, this throw-away bag lightened the load for pack-outs after a fire.[24] Although smokejumpers primarily served as an advance unit to control fires before ground crews arrived, that summer also marked the first drop of an organized force to hold in check a fire that had escaped from a ground crew.[25]

The entry of the United States into World War II and the subsequent manpower shortage meant that the Forest Service had to relax the age and experience requirements for trainees, but not the physical standards. Only five experienced jumpers returned in 1942—the remainder entered military service, joined the war industry workforce, or acted as instructors for military parachute rigger schools. Because the recruits lacked fire fighting experience, the Forest Service intensified the fire control portion of smokejumper training. The military claimed most of the good equipment for the war effort, which further encouraged experimentation. Trainer Frank Derry invented a slotted chute, which was more maneuverable and allowed the parachutist to manage a more controlled descent. The war created a climate of uncertainty throughout the season as more men began to join branches of the armed forces. Some of the jumpers left mid-season, which left depleted crews to fight many lightning fires in early September in the Nez Perce and Bitterroot Forests. However, total savings attributed to the use of aerial firefighting more than doubled to $66,000 that summer.[26]

In 1941 and 1942, the former CCC buildings at Stony Creek also served as the site for student fire camps known as the Ninemile Fire Suppression Training Camp. Although most of the students were studying forestry, many were city kids who had to learn to use saws, picks, shovels, and axes in preparation for ground crew work. They acquired other skills to prepare them for forest ranger careers as well—trail building, packing, first aid, telephone maintenance, and radio operation. Along with the CCC laborers and the smokejumper trainees, the student fire fighters contributed to the threshing, haying, baling, and fence maintenance at the remount depot. Recreation at the camp also included team sport competitions between the groups.[27]

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[23] *History of Smokejumping*, 4-5.
[24] Robert Martin interview transcript, OH 133-69, Mansfield Library, University of Montana, 10-11.
[25] "Parachute Jumping of Season Planned," *The Missoula Sentinel*, March 1, 1941; Division of Fire Control, Region 1, U.S. Forest Service, *History of Smokejumping*, 4; see also Cohen, *Pictorial History of Smokejumping*; Cooley, *Trimotor and Trail*, 30-31.
[26] *History of Smokejumping*, 5-6.
[27] 1941 Student Fire Camp Yearbook and 1942 Student Fire Camp Yearbook, "Fire Camps" folder, Ninemile Ranger District, Huson, Montana; "First Arrivals at Nearby Fire Camps," *The Missoula Sentinel*, June 9, 1942.

Although the remount depot relied on labor contributions from all of the men housed at nearby camps, the firefighters in turn depended on the depot's pack strings to bring in supplies and to pack out their gear when they were fighting a fire.[28] In a busy fire season pack strings were overwhelmed with work, so the smokejumpers' gear would sometimes remain at pickup spots on the trails for weeks, where it was vulnerable to looters. The high demand placed on the pack strings increased political tension within the agency about the experimental smokejumping program. Jumpers who trained in the early years understood this and tried to pack out their own equipment whenever possible to lessen the burden on the pack strings. [29]

*End of the CCC and Birth of the CPS*

The Forest Service temporarily solved their need for hardy labor during the war by taking advantage of the conscientious objectors organized under the Civilian Public Service (CPS). The CPS formed in response to the Selective Training and Service Act (1940) as the first legal alternative service for conscientious objectors. The program was a collaborative effort of the Selective Service, Mennonites, Church of the Brethren, The Society of Friends, and antiwar groups.[30] About 70,000 men applied for CO status and half of those received it; 12,000 of those served in CPS camps around the country, and nearly one-fourth of all CPS labor went towards preventing and fighting forest fires.[31] All of the CPS men who participated in the smokejumper program during the war were volunteers who represented the growing interest among some conscientious objectors to find more meaningful work, particularly if it involved a measure of risk. A flood of inquiries from individual CPS draftees about the smokejumping program led to solicitation at all CPS camps for volunteers. About three hundred men applied, and 70 men total were selected as trainees in the summer of 1943.[32]

Although the CPS program was burgeoning, the war abruptly ended the need for CCC work relief camps. As of January 1, 1942, only fourteen of the original thirty-eight CCC camps remained in operation in Region 1.[33] By July 30, 1942, the last fourteen CCC camps had closed, including F-81 at Camp Menard.[34] In February, 1943, the Forest Service partially dismantled the camp and sent fourteen buildings north for use on the Alaska-Canada highway construction project. Eight buildings remained, including the mess hall and several barracks.[35] The same year, the government sold at auction the fourteen buildings at Camp Ninemile on Stony Creek (five barracks, two bath houses, a cook and mess hall, storage buildings, a shop, recreation hall, and officers' quarters) for lumber, with the provision that they had to be removed immediately and the site cleared. Local residents paid from $27 to $228 for the buildings made of yellow pine, fir, and larch.[36] Thus, by 1943 the Stony Creek camp site was reduced to the rock-lined paths, piles of stones, and poured concrete foundations that can still be seen there today. Camp Menard had enough suitable buildings to house the wartime smokejumpers, however, and its closer proximity to the remount depot and Missoula provided additional momentum for the project.

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[28] *History of Smokejumping*, 14.
[29] Francis Lufkin interview transcript, Mansfield Library, University of Montana, 17, 31.
[30] *American Aviation Heritage*, 172.
[31] *World War II and the American Home Front*, 20; *American Aviation Heritage*, 172.
[32] Mark Matthews, *Smokejumping on the Western Fire Line: Conscientious Objectors during World War II* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2006), 31.
[33] "CCC Camps in Region One, All Periods, As of January 1, 1942," *CCC Handbook R-1*, Sup. 36 (1-2-42), p. 106a, in 'Articles—Bill Sharp" file, Ninemile Ranger District, Huson, Montana.
[34] "All CCC Camps Out Next Three Weeks, *The Missoula Sentinel*, July 10, 1942, 2.
[35] "Ninemile CCC Dismantling Due," *The Missoula Sentinel*, February 24, 1943; see also Matthews, S*mokejumping on the Western Fire Line*, 158.
[36] "First CCC Camp to Be Sold to High Bidder," *The Missoula Sentinel*, November 23, 1943, 5; "CCC Buildings On Ninemile Sold by U.S.," *The Missoula Sentinel*, December 16, 1943.

*Inaugural Year for CPS Smokejumpers at Seeley Lake: 1943*

All CPS camps followed the CCC program model, served many of the same agencies including the Forest Service and the National Park Service, and often used their remaining facilities.[37] However, the 1943 training season for CPS smokejumpers coincided with the disruptive dismantling of many of the CCC buildings at Camp Menard, and so the initial group of COs trained at Seeley Lake using the ranger station facilities and Camp Paxson, a Boy Scout camp, across the lake. Ground training had improved to include two separate plane mock ups for practicing exits; one simulated the Travelaire and the other the Trimotor.[38] The men crossed the lake each morning from Camp Paxson to the training course at the ranger station.[39] But training was still not standardized in recorded protocol. Former jumper William Wood remembered, "We went out and we jumped off of fence rails and we had some ramps built and climbing ropes and some of those very rudimentary obstacle course things and we'd get up on top of the ramp and jump off. The fellow that could do it best got to be the instructor. . . . We had a big rope we'd get up on a high fence and swing off and drop off the rope and try to simulate a parachute landing."[40] Once the season began, the jumpers were headquartered at Hale Field in Missoula, where they also had a parachute loft.[41] Riggers working in the loft at Hale Field also made equipment such as tents and packsacks for other Forest Service personnel.[42] Region 1 attributed a total savings of $75,000 to the new program for the 1943 season.[43]

*Camp Menard, the Civilian Public Service Camp 103 at Ninemile: 1944-1945*

In the 1944 training season, the eight buildings at Camp Menard became the core of the new CPS Camp 103, which the Forest Service specifically set up as a permanent, centralized facility to train smokejumpers and replaced the temporary training site at Seeley Lake. The total number of CPS smokejumpers increased to 110 that year, and about 60 percent of the CPS men from that previous summer returned—many had worked on winter projects for the Forest Service while waiting for the fire season to resume.

Standardization of training plans and equipment were a necessity during this time of labor scarcity so that men could work as trainers or as jumpers on fires outside of their home region without compromising safety or efficiency.[44] The Forest Service developed training facilities at the south end of Camp Menard that served as infrastructure for that standardization, including: a parachute loft; a practice jump tower consisting of a two-by-four platform set on poles in front of a sawdust pit; a multi-apparatus obstacle course; two wooden plane mockup units for practicing exits; a "drop-rig" of highline poles and cables to practice tree let-downs; running trails; and a four-foot-high landing simulator platform with a sawdust pit in front of it for practicing ground rolls.[45] Recreational facilities for the men added to the training apparatus, including a baseball diamond with a backstop in the grassy area inside of the camp's central oval," horseshoes, basketball, and a volleyball net.[46]

The two years of smokejumper training and year-round CPS activity at Camp Menard laid an important foundation for the program's continuation after the war. Sometime during the war, the Forest Service

[37] Matthews, *Smokejumping on the Western Fire Line,* 28.
[38] Philip B. Stanley, CPS, 1943 Seeley Lake trainee, interview transcript, Mansfield Library, University of Montana, 3.
[39] Joseph Osbourne interview transcript, OH133-82, Mansfield Library, University of Montana, 2.
[40] William Wood interview transcript, Mansfield Library, University of Montana, 8.
[41] Al Cramer interview transcript, Mansfield Library, University of Montana, 3.
[42] Ibid., 10.
[43] *History of Smokejumping, 1939-1949,* 6-7.
[44] Lufkin transcript 16.
[45] Don Halloran interview transcript, OH133-44, 12, Mansfield Library, University of Montana.
[46] Conrad Orr, interview transcript, Mansfield Library, University of Montana, 10.

held a demonstration for officials from Washington, DC, with CPS men performing exhibition jumps in the pastures west of Camp Menard and the Remount Depot.[47] In 1944, the Forest Service lifted the program's experimental status and accepted it as part of the agency's regular organization. For the first time, officials reduced ground forces in some National Forests because smokejumper units kept forest fires contained before they burned out of control. Ninemile was primarily a training facility but its proximity to Missoula allowed for movement of men back and forth during the fire season. The agency organized a "standby" unit that remained in Missoula and varied in size, with men rotating in and out from the feeder base. Although the dirt airstrip at Sixmile remained in use, most takeoffs originated from Hale Field in Missoula.[48] During the 1944 fire season, some of the jumpers bunked at Savenac Nursery west of Missoula, and others lived in a rented fraternity house in town.[49] The Priess Hotel on Higgins Avenue also served as housing for men who alternated between the hotel and Camp Menard.[50] With a total of 220 CPS smokejumpers participating agency wide, by 1945 the program had expanded enough to justify re-activating a base at Winthrop, Washington. The Forest Service attributed a net savings of $346,780 to the use of smokejumper crews in that busy fire season.[51]

*Postwar Smokejumping Activity at Ninemile, 1946-1954*

The end of World War II coincided with the close of the 1945 fire season. The CPS program disbanded and, although some of the experienced CPS jumpers would have rejoined in 1946, returning veterans received first priority for available jobs at home. The smokejumper program was no exception. Only 22 experienced jumpers came back to serve as foremen and squad leaders.[52] The training program continued to expand and the Johnson Flying Service purchased a C-47 (DC-3) plane for carrying larger crews to fires. Region 1 trained 150 jumpers in the first year of peacetime operation: 84 percent were veterans and 40 percent were college students. One jumper remembered that the ex-servicemen made 1946 "the year of the outlaws" because they were "still fighting the war" and had "a don't-give-a-damn attitude."[53] Because the experienced CPS men did not return, the lack of experienced jumpers also led to an absence of hierarchy that year. "I've always characterized it as being the only successful anarchy that's ever persisted for two years," recalled another jumper from the 1946 training season.[54]

Training and project work continued at Grand Menard in 1947, although the bases at Cave Junction, Oregon, and McCall, Idaho, developed their own training facilities that year instead of sending recruits to Ninemile. During the fire season the jumpers moved to the fire season base at Hale Field, the home of Johnson Flying Service, and bunked in the stables at the fairgrounds nearby.[55] Although Hale Field had become the main airstrip for the program, in 1948 the Forest Service also found the need to construct a new airstrip just west of the remount depot for conducting practice jumps into the depot's hay meadows. To construct the airstrip, the workers leveled a section of the field about 2,100 feet long running north-south. The Trimotors and Travelaires were capable of taking off and landing from a short landing strip such as this, but the slightly sloped terrain required additional cutting and berming on each side to create a more horizontal landing surface.[56] Once established, the airstrip became a frequent reminder of how

[47] Matthews, *Smokejumping on the Western Fire Line*, 75.
[48] Joseph Osbourne transcript, 16.
[49] Ibid., 17.
[50] Cohen, *Pictorial History*, 45.
[51] *History of Smokejumping*, 8-9.
[52] Ibid., 11.
[53] Stan Sykes, veteran, 1946 trainee at Ninemile interview transcript OH 0133-0104, Mansfield Library, University of Montana, 5, 11.
[54] Wally Henderson interview transcript, Mansfield Library, University of Montana, 13, 24.
[55] Ibid., 24-25.
[56] Phillip Davis interview transcript OH 133-24, 5.

quickly the Forest Service's management tools were changing. The planes often had to buzz the airstrip to clear it of grazing mules before the jumpers could land there.[57] General project work for the Forest Service also continued at Camp Menard after the war in addition to fire fighting activity. Men held sawing contests at "the wood landing," sharpened and maintained tools in the "filing shack" or tool shed, and treated poles with creosote at a small plant near their training facilities.[58]

The 1949 fire season was the second most active since the inception of smokejumping, but the year turned tragic when 13 smokejumpers lost their lives fighting the Mann Gulch fire in the Helena National Forest. The Ninemile site was intimately connected to the chain of events that led to the first major loss of lives for the smokejumping program. The men who died were "stragglers" who had arrived late to Camp Menard from their respective colleges. Their foreman on the fire, Wag Dodge, who survived the fire, was a construction foreman at Ninemile in charge of building the culverts across the camp. Squad leader L.A. Pickard had put them through their refresher training at Ninemile, which included some physical conditioning and two practice jumps from the new airstrip west of the remount depot. The men traveled to Missoula, then to the Nez Perce Forest for project work, and had returned to Missoula the day before being sent out on the Mann Gulch fire in a C-47.[59] The lessons the Forest Service learned at Mann Gulch about how to respond properly to a "blow up" on a forest fire became part of subsequent smokejumper training at Ninemile.

In 1950 and 1951, Hollywood came to Ninemile to film "Red Skies of Montana," a 20th Century-Fox production that portrayed the saga of the smokejumping program in a heroic story reminiscent of the Mann Gulch tragedy. The movie featured many outdoor scenes filmed at Camp Menard. The actors participated in training with the regular jumpers and reportedly lost an average of 11 pounds after just two days of working the obstacle course, practicing jumps from the tower, and hiking on the trails.[60]

Interest from Hollywood represented a popular fascination with the risky business of aerial firefighting, but failed to capture the far-reaching legacy of a program that even early proponents did not predict. The program contributed significantly to the national civilian defense program during the war. The ongoing smokejumper training at Grand Menard had ensured that fires were kept to a minimum, which allowed military pilot training programs to proceed without hindrance from fire smoke.[61] The economics of air travel versus foot travel made a clear argument for allocating more support for smokejumping. From 1905 to 1930, when foot travel and pack mules were the mode of travel, the average yearly fire loss in Region 1 was 252,000 acres. In the 1930s, road and trail improvement reduced the average fire loss to 65,200 acres. From 1941 to 1949, the addition of planes and smokejumpers reduced average yearly fire loss to just 8,888 acres. The agency estimated a savings of $900,000 in fire suppression costs during the 1940s, which firmly established the program's importance for the agency.[62]

By 1952, economic success and service to the military provided political momentum for a centralized aerial fire depot in Missoula that would eliminate the need for the increasingly inadequate facilities at Ninemile and Hale Field. Congress authorized funding for the new depot that year, but training continued at Ninemile until the following year. Although it was the final year for the program at Camp

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[57] Joslin, *Uncle Sam's Cabins,* 47.
[58] L.A. Pickard interview transcript OH133-86, Mansfield Library, University of Montana, 2-4.
[59] Ibid., 28-29.
[60] Cohen, *Pictorial History of Smokejumping*, 154-156.
[61] *Operation Smokejumper, Implemented by S.3175 (Murray) and H.R. 7257 (Mansfield),* (Missoula: Missoula Chamber of Commerce, 1950), National Forest Service History Museum, John H. Dieterech Collection, Library UL 059), i.
[62] Ibid., 6, 8.

Menard, 1953 set a new record for smokejumping activity, which included a special-service detachment of twelve jumpmasters trained at Camp Menard.[63] During the fire season the barracks at Fort Missoula served as jumper housing, and a nearby building provided a place to hang parachutes for inspection and repair after a fire. Ninemile became a less significant site for the program as it prepared for the move into the new aerial fire depot. The regional forester decided to close the remount depot due to the growth and effectiveness of aerial firefighting and the increase in road development within forests. While the firefighting crews continued to rely on the pack strings, ground crews had diminished significantly and vehicles could easily access areas that were still roadless in the 1930s. In just two decades, the transition to an almost total reliance on machine-powered technology ended the period when smokejumpers and pack strings from Ninemile shared a common facility and worked together to protect national forests.

*Significance of Ninemile Sites in the Aviation Context*

The Forest Service and CCC facilities at Ninemile together should be recognized as the first centralized training site for the U.S. Forest Service smokejumping program, which changed the nation's approach to wildland firefighting and influenced the development of military paratrooper operations. Seeley Lake and the North Cascades Smokejumper Base pre-date the Ninemile training sites in the history of the program's development, but the World War II-era activities at Ninemile represent a particularly important chapter in the survival and development of aerial firefighting within the Forest Service. Camp Menard was a successful wartime training base during a time of limited resources because of its proximity to Missoula, the Johnson Flying Service, and other support facilities in town. The camp's location within a national forest, the adjacent airstrip, and the convenience of pre-existing CCC camp infrastructure provided the basic elements for the training facilities. The subsequent installation of effective training apparatus provided the ideal physical conditions for the project to survive and flourish during the war, with the key addition of CPS labor. Because the activities of smokejumping, forest management, the development of backcountry roads and buildings, and ranching activities at the remount depot were intertwined from 1941 to 1953 at Ninemile, the site provides the only opportunity to understand how smokejumping developed within and contributed to the entire spectrum of Forest Service activities. For this reason, the entire Ninemile area, including the two former CCC camps, the hayfields, the airstrip, and the remount depot should be considered and interpreted as related group of sites.

Historic Context: World War II and the American Home Front

As an important physical location on the World War II American home front, the Ninemile training facility sites are nationally significant under criterion 1 as a place associated with manpower. The remote sites also qualify under criterion 1 as a place associated with civil rights because they served as segregated housing for conscientious objectors during World War II.[64] According to Roger E. Kelly, CPS camps such as Camp Menard at Ninemile fall under the category of "controlled group camps," along with Japanese-American internment camps, Department of Justice internment camps, Department of the Army prisoner-of-war camps, and the "duration villages" that housed Aleut Alaska Native people.[65] The activities of CPS smokejumpers at Ninemile fall under theme V (developing the American

[63] *History of Smokejumping,* 15.
[64] For a complete list of the six property types associated with the home front, see *World War II and the American Home Front,* 128-129.
[65] Roger E. Kelly, "America's World War II Home Front Heritage," in *CRM: The Journal of Heritage Stewardship,* vol. 1, no. 2, Summer 2004, 34-50.

economy) subtheme 4 (workers and work culture); theme IV (shaping the political landscape) subtheme 1 (parties, protests, and movements); and theme IV, subtheme 3 (military institutions and activities).

*The Civilian Public Service at Seeley Lake: 1943*

The smokejumping program at Ninemile provided a unique opportunity for conscientious objectors to contribute to national wartime efforts on the home front and to reclaim their patriotism. Labeled "yellowbellies" or "conchies" by those who considered them unpatriotic, cowardly traitors, the CPS men experienced harassment and discrimination ranging from loss of employment to physical assault. In addition to the hostility they encountered because of their pacifist stance, these men and their families endured the same hardships of dislocation as the many workers who migrated to industrial centers around the country as participants in the home front mobilization.[66] Service in CPS camps meant an uncertain suspension of life as they had known it before the war. Like their counterparts in factories and military units, the CPS men signed up for an indefinite period of work while living in temporary housing, often at a great distance from their families. Despite their contribution to labor needs on the home front, they continued to experience situations of social hostility and prejudice. Remote labor camps such as Ninemile provided some respite from public hostility, but visits to town and encounters with certain unsympathetic Forest Service employees ensured that the peaceful camaraderie found in the camps was often challenged.[67] However, those who served as smokejumpers in Montana may have faced less discrimination than CPS men at other camps because local residents understood the critical importance of having dedicated laborers to prevent and fight forest fires during the manpower shortage of the war years.[68]

Conscientious objectors supplied labor for the Forest Service to compensate for the nation's loss of manpower during wartime. Putting up hay at the remount depot was an important Forest Service project for jumpers every year when they were not out on fires. Several men would operate the baler, another would buck the bales over the tailgate of the large trucks used for hauling pack strings and hay, and another would stack the bales. A full day of hay work was sometimes followed by a full night of work fighting fires.[69] Other project work included maintaining trails, cutting wood with cross-cut saws for use in the camp over the winter, conducting timber inventories, building bridges, and constructing and moving buildings and fences. Because the CPS men remained as year-round laborers, they were more familiar with the Forest Service "overhead" and contributed to mutual respect between the men.[70] It is likely that they made greater use of the remount depot buildings as a result of this more intensive, long-term relationship. By extension, administrative buildings, shops, barns, and hayfields became part of the physical matrix that supported and relied on CPS smokejumper labor during the war.

*Grand Menard Period: 1944-1953*

Although the training of CPS jumpers had its inaugural year at Seeley Lake in 1943, CPS Camp No. 103 at Ninemile's Camp Menard was the more significant training site within the World War II home front context because the program gained momentum and grew significantly in the final two years of the war. In one respect, the CPS smokejumpers served as guinea pigs because the training and jumping techniques developed during the war became the standard practices still used today.[71] Thus, for the Forest Service, the training and activities at Camp No. 103 served as a critical transition phase that

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[66] *World War II and the American Home Front*, 6.
[67] Matthews, S*mokejumping on the Western Fire Line*, 57, 61.
[68] Ibid., 68.
[69] Ibid, 8.
[70] Bob Morgan transcript, 9.
[71] Matthews, S*mokejumping on the Western Fire Line*, 4.

ensured the development and survival of the smokejumping program, which continued after the war at Camp Menard until the Aerial Fire Depot in Missoula was dedicated in 1954.

For the CPS recruits, Camp Menard also became a symbolically important location of their contribution to the war, memorialized in song by labor organizer and folk singer Bruce "Utah" Phillips and fondly remembered at CPS reunions decades later. Phillips's tribute to the CPS smokejumpers, "Peace Jumpers," summarizes their struggle with masculine identity, their experience of discrimination, their response to accusations of cowardice, and their belief that fighting fires at home was an important part of the war effort.

The wartime CPS smokejumper program at Ninemile directly aided the military war effort as a training locale for a wide variety of specialists. Throughout the war, the CPS men had frequent contact with the military during training and service operations, which further solidified their status as contributors to national security. The Forest Service's smokejumper program had a history of close military ties. In 1940, Major General William Carey Lee observed the smokejumper training at Seeley Lake as a model for Army paratrooper training at Fort Benning, Georgia. Consequently, Lee developed the 101st Airborne Division, a key unit in the Normandy invasion, and served as first Chief of the Airborne Command.[72] In the fall of 1943 military rescue units practiced at Seeley Lake after the close of the fire season. About half of those 25 men were flight surgeons of the Second Army Air Force and the Second and Third Arctic Rescue Squadrons. This training also led to the establishment of the Second Air Force Search and Rescue Section, in which the Forest Service was actively involved.[73]

The military association continued when the Ninemile sites also served as a military training facility during World War II. At the forefront of developing parachuting equipment and techniques, smokejumpers used their expertise to improve the capabilities of paratroopers and rescue squadrons. In 1945, experienced CPS jumpers instructed fourteen "paradoctors" from the Air Transport Command received training at Ninemile.[74] Those paradoctors successfully completed 79 rescue missions.[75] That same year, Ninemile jumpers went to Pendleton, Oregon, to train the 555th Battalion of Negro Paratroopers to combat incendiary fire balloons dropped by the Japanese in the Pacific Northwest. In 1945, the "Triple Nickels" also fought fires alongside the CPS smokejumpers in Forest Service Regions 1 and 6.[76] Those who entered the Armed Forces after their time at Ninemile carried their knowledge of parachuting with them into combat. Navy fighter pilot Gene Pitts completed smokejumper training after enlisting in the summer of 1942. He claimed that his training at Ninemile was far superior to his Navy instruction and proved crucial to his survival after the Japanese shot down his Hellcat fighter plane over the Solomon Islands in 1943.[77] In 1945, the smokejumpers began teaching precision jumping to the Continental Air Forces, a group of men from the 13th Naval District Headquarters, and a smaller contingent from the 11th Tactical Air Force, but the war's end cut short the rescue program.[78] In this respect, Ninemile serves as an example of the broad range of sites and activities on the home front that contributed to the effective deployment of modern technology and helped the Allies win the war.[79] The

[72] Cooley, *Trimotor and Trail*, 22; *History of Smokejumping*, 4.
[73] *History of Smokejumping*, 6-7.
[74] Cohen, *A Pictorial History of Smokejumping*, 43.
[75] *Operation Smokejumper*, ii.
[76] Ibid.
[77] Gene Pitts interview transcript, OH133-87, Mansfield Library, University of Montana, 3.
[78] *Operation Smokejumper*, ii-iii.
[79] For an overview of the role of technological deployment in World War II, see Richard Overy, *Why the Allies Won* (New York: Norton, 1995).

Forest Service later used the close and successful partnership between the smokejumper organization and the military to rationalize, in part, the need for an extensive, permanent aerial fire depot as part of Cold War era military facilities in the United States.

*Significance of Ninemile in the World War II Home Front Context*

The smokejumping program at Ninemile conveys historic significance within the World War II home front context beyond fighting forest fires and protecting national resources. At a time of massive overseas military deployment and labor mobilization on the home front, the Forest Service required an influx of both labor and ingenuity. The CPS provided such a solution, and the conscientious objectors who served under its auspices as smokejumpers experienced a wartime America quite unlike their counterparts serving in other federal agencies, other branches of the Forest Service, mental institutions, medical experiments, or time in prisons. Like Japanese-Americans, conscientious objectors struggled to reconcile their pre-war identities and community positions with wartime social politics. And like other conscientious objectors, the CPS smokejumpers found a way to serve their country during wartime without compromising their religious and moral values. But smokejumping and acting as role models for military training gave them access to an additional benefit: recognition of their bravery in a society that labeled them as unpatriotic cowards. Thus, the site of the former CPS Camp 103 at Ninemile should be recognized not just for its contribution to Forest Service history, but also as a site that uniquely combines protest and labor in a shifting political landscape.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

_ Preliminary Determination of Individual Listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
_ Previously Listed in the National Register.
XPreviously Determined Eligible by the National Register. (U.S. Forest Service Remount Depot only)
_ 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
XFederal Agency (U.S. Forest Service)
_ Local Government
_ University
_ Other (Specify Repository):

## 10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreage of Property: N/A

UTM References: **Zone Easting Northing**

## 11. FORM PREPARED BY

Name/Title: Maren Bzdek, M.A., Program Manager; Dr. Janet Ore, Associate Professor of History

Address: Center for Public History and Archaeology
Colorado State University
Campus Mail 1776
Fort Collins, CO 80523-1776

Telephone: 970-491-6130

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Edited by: National Park Service
Heritage Partnerships Program
National Park Service, Intermountain Region
P.O. Box 25287
Denver, CO 80225-02878

Telephone: 303-969-2882

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