

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument – Historic District West

other names/site number District 1; Custer Battlefield Historic District

2. Location

street & number N/A

--

 not for publication

city or town near Crow Agency

x

 vicinity

state MT code _____ county Bighorn code _____ zip code 59022

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this x nomination _____ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property x meets _____ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

x national x statewide x local

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government _____

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

Signature of commenting official _____ Date _____

Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government _____

4. 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 the Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

<input type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

<input type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2 ¹	9 ²	buildings
5 ³		sites
209 ⁴	28 ⁵	structures
		objects
216	37	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

4⁶

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Defense – Battle Site

Funerary – Cemetery

Recreation and Culture – Monument / Marker

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Recreation and Culture – Monument / Marker

Recreation and Culture – Outdoor Recreation

Landscape – Park – National Park

Funerary - Cemetery

¹ 1938 Pump house, Stone House.

² Utility Bldg, Quonset, 1961 pump house, VC, Residential area (5)

³ Battle site, archeological site, Custer National Cemetery, Last Stand Hill, and Indian Memorial.

⁴ 200 white marble markers (excluding the 52 within the fence at Last Stand Hill, part of that historic site), boundary markers (4), stone cairns (2), and route of War Department tour road and pump house road (2), and visitor use trails (1).

⁵ Red granite markers (8), tour road and entrance (2), concrete interpretive signs (3), residential area spur road (1), visitor use trails (4).

⁶ The previously listed resources have been included in the count as the prior documentation (1987) failed to count, describe and accurately assess the condition of the contributing resources within the district. Under the 1987 documentation, it appears that 203 resources would have been listed including the Stone House, the Last Stand Hill site, the National Cemetery, and the 200 markers outside the Last Stand Hill area.

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

Colonial Revival

Other – Late Victorian – Landscape Architecture –
National Cemetery

Materials

foundation: Concrete

walls: Sandstone (stone house)

concrete (pump house)

roof: Metal – Tin (stone house)

other: Marble

Granite (gravestones and monuments)

Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph

Historic District West encompasses a roughly rectangular site on the east bank of the Little Bighorn River 17 miles south of Hardin, Montana. The Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument (NM) MPDF contains landscape descriptions of the surrounding environment. Historic District West includes only a small portion of the land associated with the 1876 Battle of Little Bighorn. The district centers on the Seventh Cavalry Monument atop the so-called 'Last Stand Hill.' To the northwest of this monument rests the majority of historic resources. They largely relate to memorial efforts for fallen cavalry troopers and the creation of Custer National Cemetery. Throughout the overall district, buildings and structures include several War Department-era buildings, a cluster of National Park Service-era developments, and the Indian Memorial on the north slope of Last Stand Hill. The Battlefield Tour Road runs through the heart of the district, traveling roughly northwest to southeast out of Historic District West and into Historic District East (separate document). Grazing and farm land surround the District as well as some commercial developments. In the valley to the west, Interstate 90 and the Burlington-Quincy rail line dominate the landscape. The land within the boundary retains integrity and represents several layers of historic significance since the battle.

Narrative Description

Resources in Historic District West relate to each of Little Bighorn Battlefield NM's historic contexts. Completed in the 1880s, War Department boundary designations limited the reservation land to a roughly one-square-mile parcel of grasslands and riparian areas. The storied 'Last Stand Hill' lies at the approximate center of the district and overlooks key portions of the battlefield and subsequent developments. Since livestock grazing occurred on many of the lands to the east of the Little Bighorn River, they retain a significant degree of integrity to the historical period. However, lands on the river's west side including the historic site of the combined Lakota, Cheyenne and Arapahoe village have been developed for agricultural, commercial or transportation use and are not actively preserved.

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Contributing Resources

Battle Site – The Lakota and Cheyenne Defeat Custer

The battle site falls under the American Indian Wars - Battle Sites property type and consists of the general vegetation and topography of Historic District West, including the Little Bighorn River and Uplands landscapes described in the accompanying MPDF. It also includes the historic routes of movement for Cheyenne and Lakota warriors and companies of the Seventh Cavalry during the battle. Sections of this battle site lay outside the Monument boundaries and therefore are not being considered in this nomination. A description of landscape ecological systems that transition from upland grasslands in the east to riparian floodplain in the west can be found in the MPDF.

The broader grassland and riparian landscape of Historic District West includes much of the land associated with the attack on the combined Indian village by Custer's portion of the Seventh U.S. Cavalry (Companies C, E, F, I, and L). The land makes a general transition from a riparian zone along the east bank of the Little Bighorn River to mixed-grass prairie uplands that comprise the majority of the battle site east of the river. Along the river, steep bluffs dominate the east bank. The land then drops to a moderate open floodplain before transitioning to riparian forest along the meandering banks of the river. The river is relatively broad and shallow here although it maintains a swift current when swollen by spring snowmelt and summer rains.

The landscape's topography above the river is generally rolling with ridge-crests cut by steep ravines and coulees. Running north and east, Battle Ridge and its hillocks comprise the highest rise near the eastern boundary of the park. A small draw on its east named Horse-Holders' Ravine drains to the north and west. The westward slope of Battle Ridge overlooks Deep Ravine, a drainage running south into the Little Bighorn River. To the north of the ravine is a small hillock that extends down to steep cutaways along the floodplain. To the south of the ravine is another drainage labeled Calhoun Coulee that opens into Deep Ravine. Greasy Grass Ridge runs roughly east-west, with Calhoun Coulee to its north, Deep Ravine at its west extent, the Little Bighorn River to the south, and the mouth of Medicine Tail Coulee to the east.

Archeological Site – The Lakota and Cheyenne Defeat Custer

The battle site archeological resources are varied but extremely valuable illustrations of Little Big Horn Battle action on June 25th, 1876 in this area. Although the archeological record of this phase of the battle extends beyond the district, this nomination includes only those within National Park Service management boundaries. Archeological resources include a wide range of battle-related artifacts such as bullets, casings, and an array of equipment left at the site or used to entrench the cavalry troopers. Several archeological surveys of the area, most notably following a grassfire in 1983, have uncovered the majority of these materials. Those surveys included efforts to verify white and Indian accounts of the battle and a project to confirm the accuracy of marker placement for Seventh Cavalry casualties. The majority of artifacts are casings and bullets from rounds fired by Seventh Cavalry troopers and Lakota and Cheyenne warriors during the fight. Resources also include equipment dropped by battle participants and human remains that have been uncovered and/or lie in-situ on the battlefield.

Last Stand Hill (Historic Site)

The Last Stand Hill historic site includes a collection of resources that fall under the War Department – Monuments and Markers property type. On this site, Terry and Gibbon's columns first discovered the remains of Lt. Col. George A. Custer and a group of men from the Seventh Cavalry. Following the battle, the War Department oversaw the placement of the prominent Seventh Cavalry Monument and marble markers to the fallen troopers. After tourists chipped away at the obelisk and the markers, the War Department installed protective iron fences

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around the monument and fifty-two marble markers concentrated on the southern slope of Last Stand Hill where Custer and at least twenty-seven other cavalry troopers met their ends.

The stone monument on Last Stand Hill memorializes those who lost their lives in the Battle of the Little Bighorn. Developed by Quartermaster General Meigs in 1878, the specifications called for a truncated stone pyramid 11 1/2' high and 6' wide at the base that tapered to 3 1/2' at the top. The four sides of the shaft were to display the names of the fallen officers, civilians, scouts, and enlisted men. The War Department granted the contract to the Mount Auburn Marble and Granite Works of Cambridge, Massachusetts on February 21, 1879. Mount Auburn constructed the memorial in three part--the base and two pyramidal sections. Two hundred sixty-one names are cut on the four faces of the two upper stones. One side of the base bears the following inscription: "In memory of officers and soldiers who fell near this place fighting with the Seventh United States Cavalry against Sioux Indians, on the 25th and 26th of June, A.D. 1876."⁷

A small patch of raised green turf bordered by grey granite rectangular blocks of varying lengths, approximately 6" high and 1' thick, surround the Seventh Cavalry Memorial. The granite blocks have periodically-spaced holes that served as post anchors for a fence installed in 1884 to prevent vandalism. In 1963, the National Park Service (NPS) removed the fence due to complaints about the Seventh Cavalry Monument's visibility. Beyond the border, a concrete sidewalk encircles the monument and allows visitors to approach and read the inscriptions. On the monument's east side, a concrete interpretive marker with aluminum lettering interprets the monument's history and the burial of Seventh Cavalry troopers.⁸

Below the Seventh Cavalry Monument are a collection of 52 white marble markers of the same variety described below under 'Seventh Cavalry Markers.' This cluster of markers indicates the location where the relief column discovered Lt. Col. Custer and at least twenty-seven other men on June 27th, 1876. In 1890, the War Department placed these markers, along with 200 others, throughout Historic District West. Archeological investigations conducted from the 1980s into the 2000s concluded that many of the markers are extraneous, although they successfully displayed areas of the most severe fighting between the Seventh Cavalry and Lakota and Cheyenne warriors. In 1930, the War Department placed the iron fence around the Last Stand Hill marker cluster to provide protection from relic hunters. Approximately four feet high, the fence is cast iron and consists of one-inch iron bars every three inches that are welded to narrow strips of flattened iron. Approximately every eight feet, I-beam iron line posts topped with ball-finials anchor the fencing. On the inside of the I-beam post is lettering as follows: "Illinois G. U.S.A." At the top of each ball finial is cast lettering: "101D." The fence encloses a roughly rectangular course around the markers with small adjustments in the fence-line atop Last Stand Hill to accommodate for the sidewalk around the Seventh Cavalry Memorial. Near the center of the north fence line, just to the east of a jut in the fence alongside the sidewalk, there is a double-swing gate with a gently-rising bar making an elevated curve at its center, adorned with decorative scrolling. Small iron straps span each leaf of the gate. The gateposts and all corner posts are identical--a five-foot square post with paneling and square capital topped by a ball-finial.⁹

Custer National Cemetery (Historic Site)

Custer National Cemetery, also referred to as Custer Battlefield National Cemetery, is a significant and diverse landscape within Historic District West. It falls under the War Department – The National Cemetery Property Type. The National Cemetery generally includes the area surveyed by the War Department and the National Park Service between 1890 and 1967. Although an iron fence once enclosed the cemetery, the park staff removed it sometime after 1967. The present boundary corresponds to the cemetery's maintained landscape, including all associated plantings, walkways, markers, monuments, and Superintendent's House.

⁷ This paragraph adapted from U.S. Department of the Interior, "Partial Inventory – Custer Battlefield Historic District,"

⁸ Jerome Greene, *Stricken Field: The Little Bighorn Since 1876* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008), 38.

⁹ Greene, *Stricken Field*, 57.

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Although established by the War Department in 1879, Custer National Cemetery only began to take its present shape in 1890. In that year, military details started using the plateau where the cemetery now lies as an ad-hoc burial site for soldiers' remains transferred from recently closed frontier posts. Upon the arrival of the first Superintendent, Andrew Grover, in 1893, the section of upland plains just below the famed Last Stand Hill began transforming into the National Cemetery seen today. In 1894, Grover plotted the boundaries for and systematically filled Custer National Cemetery. The cemetery consists of the design elements characteristic of many national cemeteries, including a rolling irrigated turf lawn in which stand symmetrical lines of just over 4,000 white marble headstones. Three monuments also dot the older areas of the cemetery. These are associated with specific Indian War battles such as the Hayfield Fight and the Battle of Bear Paw Mountain. Interspersed in the older sections of the cemetery are a few privately-purchased markers that pre-date the standardization the War Department began requiring in the late-nineteenth century.¹⁰

Oriented from northwest to southeast, the cemetery consists of an expansive L-shape of sections. The main tract has paired sections straddling a 6'-wide concrete cemetery street with curbing. From northwest to southeast, the paired sections are as follows: Sections E (south) and F (north), Sections C (north) and D (south), and Sections B (north) and A (south). Added in 1967 were Sections G (north) and H (south) which extend southwest from the main tract. Crossing the road roughly at its midpoint (dividing Sections A and B and Sections C and D) is a 6' concrete walkway for pedestrian traffic. At the intersection of the walkway and the cemetery street is a circular concrete drive in which the flagpole is centered. The flagpole is an 85' steel pole of four bolted sections that replaced a wooden flagpole in 1908. Along both avenues is concrete curbing. Lining the majority of the road and walkway are shade trees of variant ages and species: Red Cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*), Blue Spruce (*Picea pungens*), and more recently, Rocky Mountain Juniper (*Juniperus scopulorum*). Originally bounded by an iron fence and a Tartarian Honeysuckle (*Lonicera tartarica*) hedge, the borders of the cemetery are now delineated only by rows of trees or the extent of mowed grass, allowing free access for visitors.¹¹

Section A primarily holds the bodies of the 2nd, 5th, and Seventh United States Cavalry and those who fell at the 1877 Battle of Bear Paw Mountains. A monument to the Bear Paw Mountain dead stands in this section. In addition to veterans of the Spanish-American War, the First and Second World Wars, Korea, and Vietnam, Sections B and C contain burials from several troops of the Seventh Cavalry. Finally, men of the Fifth United States Cavalry, Companies B, C, G, and I are buried in Section D. Alongside many interred veterans lie the remains of their dependent spouses.¹²

Within the cemetery, there are several different variations of monuments and markers from several periods, as well as plots waiting to be filled. As all national cemeteries in the United States retain continuing significance to the present, all headstones and monuments within Custer National Cemetery are contributing resources.

Superintendent's House: Constructed in 1894 by the War Department, the Superintendent's House (or Stone House) falls under the War Department – Buildings and Structures Property Type and was the first permanent building in Custer Battlefield National Monument. The Superintendent's House is situated at the cemetery's northern edge with the main cemetery gates to the northeast. Featuring a full basement, the two-story stone structure measures 30' square. The foundation walls are constructed of local red sandstone, faced on both sides, with the exterior featuring cement mortar. The exterior walls of local red sandstone are laid in a random ashlar pattern with raised beaded pointing.

¹⁰ Greene, *Stricken Field*, 46-47.

¹¹ Huff Raithel, "Cemetery Restoration – 900 Sites," Drawing No. 3025B, November 1, 1967, Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument, National Park Service Technical Information Center, Denver (hereafter NPS-TIC); "National Cemetery Historic District," September 6, 1975, LIBI LCS; Don Rickey, Jr., *History of Custer Battlefield* (Fort Collins: Old Army Press, 2005 [orig. 1967]) 57.

¹² This paragraph adapted from U.S. Department of the Interior, "Partial Inventory – Custer Battlefield Historic District," Section 7, pp. 3-4.

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The three-bay north porch measures 21'6" by 7'. A concrete slab has replaced the wood floor and a solid stone wall the stone piers. The 5" square wood columns have been cut off and reset in concrete pedestals and the original wood baluster replaced with a single horizontal 2" metal pipe imbedded in the pedestals. The centrally located common bond brick chimney is also a structural element. The 24" x 36" chimney has four 9" square flues and extends above the ridge roughly 4 feet with a 5-inch deep sandstone cap.

Flat voussoired arches are over all window and door openings and segmentally cut at the soffits. Two and three voussoirs in each arch form the keystones. Sills and basement window lintels are of broken-face stone. The exterior doors—of two-panel and two-light construction with corner block trim, symmetrically molded—are original. The exterior windows are muntined double-hung sash with four-over-four lights on the first floor and six-over-six lights on the second floor. The south six-light sash and the original exterior office door have been replaced with modern sash, thus producing a distinct difference in muntin profiles. There is a nine-light round attic window in each gable end.

The building possesses a gable roof which runs north/south, and the porch has a 1/2 hip roof. The ridges and hips are finished with metal hip roll. Cedar shingles cover the roofs. The eaves overhand 2' and return to the gable ends 1'13". The exposed rafter ends and gable brackets are rounded. The exposed roof-boarding is 7/8" x 4" with matched and beaded battens laid parallel to the ridge.

The first and second floor stairway and the woodwork are original and unaltered. The stairs have a run of 10 1/2", rise of 7 1/2", and rounded nosings and molded underneath. The two balusters are turned 1 1/4", supporting a 2 1/2-inch molded rail and anchored to a 5" x 5" chamfered and molded newell post. The stairway has two quarter turns, the first with a landing, and the second with winders. The basement stairway is a straight run with no risers. In good condition, the building retains its historical integrity.

Originally constructed along with the Superintendent's House were several out-buildings of similar construction. They were located under the roof of a one-and-one-half-story structure and included a privy, a stable, and a large drive-in storage area. In, 1934, a stone garage was built at a cost of \$3,800. In 1964, officials made plans to enlarge the cemetery that necessitated demolishing the stable and garage that year.¹³

Fort C.F. Smith Memorial: Section B features this monument commemorating men killed in the Hayfield Fight at Fort C.F. Smith in 1867. The Twenty-Seventh Infantry erected the monument in 1868. With the closure of Fort C.F. Smith, in 1892, the War Department transferred its burials and the monument to Custer National Cemetery. They were initially placed northwest of the Stone House in what would become Section F. However, by 1901 cemetery staff moved them to their present location in Section B. The monument is a white marble obelisk standing 10'6" high and approximately 18"x18" at the base, tapering to its point at the top.¹⁴

Fort Keogh / Bear Paw Monument: Standing in Section B, this monument commemorates soldiers killed at the following engagements: Clark's Fork (1878), Wolf Mountains (1877), Tongue River (1877), Ofallon Creek (1880), Pumpkin Creek (1879), Misspuli Creek (1879), and Muddy Creek (1877). In approximately 1880, it was originally erected at Fort Keogh and subsequently moved with

¹³ This building description extracted from U.S. Department of the Interior, "Partial Inventory – Custer Battlefield Historic District," Section 7, pp. 4-6.

¹⁴ "Fort C.F. Smith Memorial," Structure No. HS-0316B, January, 2005, LIBI LCS; Rickey, 51-52; Greene, *Stricken Field*, 43.

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that post's remains to Custer National Cemetery in 1908. It is a smooth red pegmatite granite cube with dimensions of approximately 3'6."¹⁵

Bear Paw Battle Monument: This monument within Section B memorializes men of the Second and Seventh U.S. Cavalry and the Fifth U.S. Infantry killed at the Battle of Bear Paw Mountain in 1877. In that year, it was originally erected at Fort Assiniboine but moved to Custer National Cemetery with the dead of that engagement in 1912. It is a 48" high 32" square marker of polished grey pegmatite granite with incised lettering on its sides. It rests on a 48" square concrete base.¹⁶

Private Gravestones: Gravestones of 52 soldiers or spouses of soldiers exist within the monument that are not government-issue gravestones. They primarily date from before the First World War, after which the War Department standardized its gravestones to the 'general type' described below. These assorted gravestones lie throughout Sections A and B of the cemetery. They are generally typical gravestones of the late-nineteenth century Victorian period incorporating simple stylistic features such as lambs and crosses. They vary in material but are usually granite or marble.¹⁷

National Cemetery Markers – Civil War Type: There are 741 of these gravestones scattered through Sections A, B and C. They are 10" wide and 4" thick white marble slabs standing 16"-20" above grade with a rounded top. On their face they carry a sunken shield with a raised inscription identifying the name of the interred and their unit assignment at time of death.¹⁸

National Cemetery Markers – Spanish-American War Type: Throughout Sections A, B and C are 426 gravestones of this type. They are 12" wide and 4" thick white marble slabs standing 20"-22" above grade with a rounded top. On their face they carry a sunken shield with raised inscription identifying the name of the interred and their unit assignment at time of death.¹⁹

National Cemetery Markers – General Type – Vertical: There are approximately 3042 gravestones of this type filling all cemetery sections. They are 13" wide and 4" thick white marble slabs standing 20"-22" above grade with a rounded top. On their face they carry the incised name of the interred, the unit(s) in which they served, the conflicts in which they fought (if applicable), and their birth and death dates. An optional religious symbol (usually a Latin Cross) is carved into the slab above the deceased's name.²⁰

National Cemetery Markers – General Type – Flush: Only two gravestones of this type exist. They are flush grey granite markers with a 12" by 24" face and incised lettering identifying the name of the interred, the unit(s) in which they served, the conflicts in which they fought (if applicable), and

¹⁵ The monument is commonly referred to as the Fort Keogh or Fifth Infantry Monument. However, the current LCS file lists this monument as the Bear Paw Monument. "Bear Paw (Fort Keogh) Monument," Structure No. HS-1236B, January 2005, LIBI LCS; Greene, *Stricken Field*, 50-51.

¹⁶ "Bear Paw Battle Monument," Bldg. No. HS-0002B, LIBI LCS; Greene, *Stricken Field*, 52.

¹⁷ See Classified Structures documentation for specific descriptions.

¹⁸ "National Cemetery Markers – Civil War Type," Structure No. HS-0037, LIBI LCS.

¹⁹ "National Cemetery Markers – Spanish-American War Type," Structure No. HS-0038, LIBI LCS.

²⁰ The National Park Service last surveyed these structures for the List of Classified Structures in 2004. While the cemetery has been closed to new plot reservations since 1972, there are still occasional burials, mostly of military spouses who reserved plots prior to that year. "National Cemetery Markers – General Type – Vertical," Structure No. HS-0039, LIBI LCS.

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their birth and death dates. An optional religious symbol (usually a Latin Cross) is carved into the marker above the deceased's name.²¹

Seventh Cavalry Markers

These resources fall under the War Department Era Monuments and Markers Property Type. Two hundred markers are scattered across the battlefield in addition to 52 markers included in the Last Stand Hill Historic Site described above (totaling 252 markers in the district). The markers indicate approximate locations where Seventh Cavalry troopers fell. They are inexact, and despite the 252 markers, only 210 men fell on this portion of the battlefield. However, clusters of markers throughout the district indicate points where the Seventh Cavalry suffered its most severe losses. There are several dozen scattered markers in the north fork of Deep Ravine, leading up to a concentrated cluster of markers denoting the location where Lt. Col. Custer and around 50 troopers fell (there are 52 markers). This cluster is generally referred to as the "Last Stand markers" and sits atop Last Stand Hill. A handful of markers are interspersed along the south fork of Deep Ravine towards Greasy Grass Ridge. Small clusters of markers dot Calhoun Hill. Several dozen markers also string along the coulee below the northeast side of Custer Ridge. Most are in good condition, having been restored and reset periodically by both the War Department and the National Park Service.²²

1938 Pump House and Road

The War Department and National Park Service constructed four pump houses within the district, three of which remain and one of which is historically-significant. The War Department first constructed a pump house and a dirt access road along the Little Bighorn River in 1913. This building stood southwest of the access road's entry onto the floodplain. It had a hipped roof, wooden siding and shingles, and two rectangular sections. The accompanying dirt road ran from the crest of the ridge by the cemetery south and west onto the floodplain. While the roadbed remains and is actively used, the original pump house has been razed. In 1938, the War Department completed a now-inoperative pump house that is significant under the War Department – Buildings and Structures Property Type. It is built into a bluff along the floodplain of the Little Bighorn River, several hundred yards north of the maintenance road leading to the operational pump house within the riparian area. The floodplain immediately surrounding the 1938 pump house is fairly open and comprised largely of Western Wheatgrass (*pascopyrum smithii*), Green Needle Grass (*nassella viridula*) and Silver Sagebrush (*artemisia cana*).

The pump house has only one clearly visible elevation, the others being buried subsurface within the bluff side. Its walls are flat concrete masonry unit with an approximately 18" parapet wall above the façade. The entry on the façade is a wood panel door with metal screens covering what used to be openings. Much of the lower elements on the façade have been buried by soil deposition. Presently, the two side elevations extend above the sloped soil on either side of the façade. When original built in 1938, the building had embankments held in place by stacked stone. The stone embankments have since been removed.²³

Battlefield Tour Road Route

²¹ "National Cemetery Markers – General Type – Flush," Structure No. HS-0040, LIBI LCS.

²² Douglas D. Scott, Richard A. Fox, Jr., Melissa A. Connor and Dick Harmon, *Archaeological Perspectives on the Battle of the Little Bighorn* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989), 52.

²³ "New Pump House," Bldg. No. 7, and "Old Pump House, Bldg. No. 6, no date, List of Classified Structures Inventory Folder, White Swan Memorial Library, Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument (hereafter LIBI LCS).

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The route of the Battlefield Tour Road is contributing under the War Department – Roads and Trails property type. While the road itself is non-contributing due to loss of integrity in materials, the route of the road has not changed significantly since 1946, with the exception of the entrance. In 1957, the Park Service moved the entrance from its historic location to its present position under Mission 66. The historic contributing route within the district enters the boundary several hundred yards south of the current entrance and is identifiable by visible depressions in the landscape, remnant asphalt, and a cattle guard under the boundary fence. The route runs to the north and east to the national cemetery entrance, traversing its northern edge. The route then continues to the northeast up Last Stand Hill and along Battle Ridge to Calhoun Hill. It includes a small, one-way loop around Calhoun Hill. The route then turns south and exits the district on its southeast boundary. A remnant road bed is also visible several hundred yards south of Calhoun Hill where the tour road exited the Monument prior to the 1941 road project.

National Cemetery Boundary Markers and Fence

Established by survey in 1889, four boundary markers denote the corners of the national cemetery reservation. They fall under the War Department – Buildings and Structures Property Type. These markers are square 6"x6" grey iron posts standing approximately 5' above surface. On the outward facing side of each marker is capital lettering that reads vertically from top to bottom as follows: "U.S. MIL. RES'N." Barbed wiring extends away from each marker to delineate the boundary of the Monument. The fence by the two western markers continues without an angle as the markers sit on the bluff tops above the western boundary of the Monument. The initial boundary established by executive order and defined by Secretary of War Endicott in 1886 extends to the east bank of the Little Bighorn River. However, the cavalry detachment that placed the markers nearest the river placed them on the bluffs overlooking the river rather than at the water's edge. It is possible that the troopers placed the markers there to avoid wash-out from the frequent floods along the Little Bighorn River. A re-fencing project completed in 2000 replaced the barbed wire fencing for this area and extended the fence onto the floodplain of the river, although fence maintenance made following the exact boundary impractical. The markers show moderate signs of weathering, mostly limited rusting.²⁴

Boundary UTMS	Easting	Northing ²⁵
NW corner	309405	5048835
SW corner	310576	5047660
SE corner	311590	5048326
NE corner	310697	5049686

Memorial Cairns

²⁴ William C. Endicott, Secretary of War to President Grover Cleveland, November 27, 1886; Folder 0-10, "Laws and Legal Matters, Box 166, National Parks and Monuments Central Classified Files – Custer Battlefield National Monument; Records of the National Park Service, Record Group 79, National Archives and Records Administration – Midwest Region (Kansas City) (hereafter NARA-KC); Greene, *Stricken Field*, 165.

²⁵ Variations between site survey UTMs (listed above) and boundary demarcations (section G below) represent differences between legal boundary and surveyed boundaries as well as accuracy error of field equipment.

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There are at least two memorial cairns within Historic District West. These cairns fall under the Indian Monuments and Markers Property Type. Their locations are classified as sensitive for archeological purposes. Cheyenne family members placed at least two of them for Lame White Man and Noisy Walking immediately following the battle on the late afternoon of June 25th. Further archeological survey and historical research may uncover additional cairns.²⁶

Indian Memorial

Dedicated in 2003, the Indian Memorial is a stone and earthen structure located to the north of the Seventh Cavalry Memorial. It is individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and therefore, also contributing to the district

Keogh/Crazy Horse Trail

Keogh/Crazy Horse trail is the only contributing visitor use trail within the district. Keogh/Crazy Horse trail is a soft-surface trail that follows routes of soldiers and warriors during the fight. Visitor use during the War Department era established each of these trails as 'social' or 'desire' paths. Documentation that confirms their existence during the period of significance is an aerial photograph of Keogh/Crazy Horse in 1935 which shows a worn path for the trail.

Non-Contributing Resources

The following resources are non-contributing either due to lack of historic significance or loss of integrity to their period of significance. This includes all Mission 66 resources at the Monument. A Determination of Eligibility completed in 2012 concluded that there were no significant/contributing Mission 66 resources at Little Bighorn Battlefield NM.

Museum/Visitor Center

Built in 1950-51 by a Billings, Montana, firm—Boespflug Construction Company—this one-story, frame building with basement rests on a foundation of poured concrete which is covered with asphalt and cork tile. The walls, both interior and exterior, are constructed of cinder block masonry, with the interior walls finished with plaster and paint. The ceiling is finished with plaster and acoustical tiles. Roof material consists of tar and gravel. In 1955, an entrance vestibule was added to the existing museum. The building is serviced from the north by a large parking lot. The National Park Service determined the visitor center ineligible for the National Register due to loss of integrity in a Determination of Eligibility completed in January of 2006.²⁷

Interpretive Trails and other structures

²⁶ John Stands in Timber and Margot Liberty, *Cheyenne Memories*, 2nd ed., (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 203.

²⁷ This paragraph adapted from U.S. Department of the Interior, "Partial Inventory – Custer Battlefield Historic District," Section 7, page 6; See U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, "Custer Battlefield NM Museum and Administration Building," Determination of Eligibility, Rodd Wheaton, January 31, 2006.

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There are four non-contributing visitor use trails within the district. They include: Deep Ravine, Indian Memorial, Last Stand Hill, and Cheyenne Markers. The Indian Memorial and Last Stand Hill trails fall outside the period of significance for the historic district and are therefore non-contributing. In 1961, the Park Service constructed Last Stand Hill trail as a Mission 66 project to provide pedestrian access to Last Stand Hill from the visitor center. A 2012 determination of eligibility for Mission 66 resources concluded that Mission 66 resources at the Monument are non-contributing due to loss of integrity. NPS contractors built the Indian Memorial trail in 2003 as a part of the Indian Memorial addition to the National Monument. Despite its association with this significant feature, the trail itself is not significant enough to warrant listing on the National Register.

The Deep Ravine trail and Cheyenne Markers trail are soft-surface trails in the district. While it is likely that visitor use during the War Department era established the trail as a 'social' or 'desire' path, there is no documentation at this time that confirms its existence during the period of significance. An aerial photograph of Deep Ravine and Cheyenne Markers in 1935 does not show worn paths for either trail. Due to the inability to confirm its establishment during the period of significance, these trails are non-contributing.²⁸

Battlefield Tour Road and associated features

From 1938-1941, the War Department constructed the Battlefield Tour Road to connect the two non-contiguous sections of the battlefield under its stewardship. The National Park Service has frequently repaved and modified the road since that time. Alterations include the addition and periodic replacement of interpretive signage beginning in the 1940s, the construction of paved and curbed turnouts, the construction of a new entrance road and entrance station in 1957, and the replacement of the entrance station in 1993. There is also an abandoned road bed from where the tour road once left the southeast monument boundary. Due to loss of integrity to its two areas of historical significance (War Department and Mission 66 development), a Determination of Eligibility completed in 2012 found the road ineligible for the National Register and non-contributing to the district.²⁹

Utility Structures

With the exception of the 1938 pump house described above, the utility structures at the Monument are non-contributing. This includes the 1961 pump house, the Quonset hut, the Mission 66 Utility building and other associated utility and maintenance structures. Though significant, these resources have lost integrity related to their primary significance as Mission 66 resources. Determinations of Eligibility completed in 2006 and 2012 found these structures to be non-contributing.³⁰

Residential Area

²⁸ While it is likely that visitor use established both the Keogh/Crazy Horse Trail and Deep Ravine Trail sometime during the War Department period, the primary sources (including letters, reports, and historic photographs) did not provide any contemporary documentation for the trails' establishment. If information arises at a future date, dating these trails to the period of significance for Historic District West, then they can be changed to contributing status with an amendment form to this document (Form 10-900-a); Aerial view looking directly down on the battlefield, ca. 1935, USA Army Air Corps, Catalogue #16999, Little Bighorn Battlefield NM Museum Collection; U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, "Mission 66 Resources at Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument," Jim Bertolini, 2012.

²⁹ "Mission 66 Resources at Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument," 2012.

³⁰ See U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, "Quonset Hut," Determination of Eligibility, Rodd Wheaton, April 17, 2006, and U.S. Department of Interior, "

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In 1961, the National Park Service completed the residential area to the northwest of the cemetery as a Mission 66 project. It includes the administration building, two family residences, an apartment building, coal storage shed, and the broader residential landscape. The Park Service added the coal storage shed in the 1970s. It is a historically insignificant structure. A Determination of Eligibility completed in 2012 found the Mission 66 residential complex non-contributing due to loss of integrity.³¹

Warrior Markers

As of the date of this nomination, there are eight (8) markers of this type placed between 1999 and 2006 within the district. These markers fall under the Indian Monuments and Markers Property Type. They are located primarily along the ridge-top to the east of Last Stand Hill as well as on Last Stand Hill. These markers are interspersed throughout the district revealing where the most intense fighting occurred between members of the Lakota and Cheyenne bands from the village and Lt. Col. Custer's five companies of cavalry. Various types of mixed-grass prairie surround each marker. At many markers there are established paths that have trampled down much of the vegetation in the immediate vicinity. One marker stands below the ridge crest near the present-day Stone House. It is surrounded by the turf lawn environment of the national cemetery and rests beside the cemetery street. The eight markers in this district stand for the following warriors: Lame White Man (Southern Cheyenne), Noisy Walking (Northern Cheyenne), Closed Hand (Northern Cheyenne), Cut Belly (Northern Cheyenne), Limber Bones (Northern Cheyenne), Black White Man (Lakota Sioux), Bear With Horns (Lakota Sioux), and one unknown Lakota Sioux. While these markers are culturally significant and compatible with other monumentation at the National Monument, they are not considered contributing at this time. Subsequent assessment to change this status may be undertaken in the future.³²

³¹ "Mission 66 Resources at Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument," 2012.

³² John A. Doerner, Chief Historian, "LIBI Warrior Marker Inventory," no date, Folder H-14 "Area and Service History 3 of 3," Administrative Files, Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

Criteria Considerations

Property is:

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

Areas of Significance

A – Ethnic Heritage / Native American; Military

B – Military

C – Landscape Architecture / Architecture

D – Archeology / Historic

Period of Significance

1876 – 1946 (District)

1890 – present (Custer National Cemetery)

Significant Dates

1876 – Battle of Little Bighorn

1879 – Designation as National Cemetery

1886 – Boundary established

1940 – Transferred to the National Park Service

1946 – Renamed a National Monument

Significant Person

Crazy Horse; Sitting Bull; George A. Custer; Gall

Cultural Affiliation

Please see Statement of Significance

Architect/Builder

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Period of Significance

The Historic District West possesses two periods of significance. The first, 1876-1946, corresponds with the battle itself and the War Department and National Park Service developments at the site until its reclassification as a National Monument in 1946. In consultation with the Keeper and following recent (2011) guidance on national cemeteries, the park chose to create a second period of significance for all those resources associated with Custer National Cemetery. According to that guidance, all national cemeteries possess continuing historic and cultural significance, and their period of significance extends to the present. Custer National Cemetery's period of significance extends from 1890, when the War Department completed the first burials within the present cemetery boundary, to the present.

Criteria Considerations

There are several resources in the district that would be required to meet Criteria Considerations if nominated individually. These include the National Cemetery (Consideration D) and the monuments and markers for the Seventh Cavalry (Consideration F for commemorative properties). However, as these resources have been nominated as part of Historic District West, a district primarily significant as the site of the Battle of the Little Bighorn, they are exempt from these considerations.³³

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

The Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) establishes the historic significance of Historic District West and its contributing resources. The Battle of the Little Bighorn is the most iconic engagement between United States armed forces and American Indians in the history of the country. The Great Sioux War of 1876-77, of which Little Bighorn was a part, represented one of the last significant efforts on the part of non-treaty American Indians to resist westward expansion by Euro-Americans. The District's primary significance is at the national level under Criterion A for association with the engagement on June 25th, 1876 between five companies of the Seventh U.S. Cavalry under command of Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer and elements of Lakota, Cheyenne and Arapahoe bands under the leadership of Sitting Bull, Gall and Crazy Horse, among others. It is also significant under Criterion B for its association with the afore-mentioned individuals (Custer, Gall, Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse). The secondary significance of the site involves its commemoration of the battle by both Euro-Americans and associated tribes including the Lakota, Cheyenne, Arapahoe, Crow and Arikara. Several of these commemorative features are significant at the national level under Criterion A as monuments and memorials to the battle, although many represent broader historic significances. Some of the minor features associated with the national cemetery are significant under Criterion C at the state level as the only examples of War Department and/or national cemetery design within the state of Montana and the surrounding Northern Plains Area.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

The significance of the Battle of the Little Bighorn and the entire National Monument are fully explained in the "Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument" Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF). This statement of significance will not repeat the information contained there. It will list resources and figures, identify their corresponding property type (if any) under the MPDF, and provide any further elaboration as needed.

³³ For information on Criteria Considerations, see *National Register Bulletin 15 – Applying National Register Criteria for Evaluation*.

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Contributing Resources

Battle Site – The Lakota and Cheyenne Defeat Custer

The Battlefield Site encompasses the majority of land over which Custer's five companies (C, E, F, I and L) of the Seventh U.S. Cavalry advanced against the eastern edge of the non-treaty Indian village. It was on this site that combined Lakota, Cheyenne and Arapahoe forces overwhelmed Custer's men and annihilated all 210 troopers (narrative below). While this battlefield site is clearly significant at the national level under Criterion A, it is also significant under Criterion B for its association with several iconic figures of the American Indian Wars, namely Sitting Bull, Crazy Horse, Gall, and George A. Custer. It is further significant under Criterion D for the wealth of archeological information already collected and potential for further yield with future study.

These four iconic figures clashed in the hills and coulees largely encompassed by the administrative boundaries of Historic District West. After Lt. Col. Custer sent Maj. Reno's detachment into the valley to attack the southern end of the village, he proceeded around present-day Weir Point, the last point at which his whereabouts are known. Atop this hill, he surveyed the scene, observing a large village in the valley below. Trumpeter John Martini (the last trooper to see Custer or his men alive) recalled that "there were no bucks to be seen; all we could see was some squaws and children playing and a few dogs and ponies. The General seemed both surprised and glad, and said the Indians must be in their tents asleep." Custer sent Martini and a storied dispatch to Capt. McDougall in charge of the pack train to "be quick" and "bring packs." Beyond this, the events that culminated in the death of Custer and 210 of his troopers has been reconstructed from primary accounts from Lakota, Cheyenne and Arapahoe participants and through historical archeology.³⁴

The initial phase of Custer's attack on the village falls outside of Historic District West boundary. After leaving Weir Point, Custer moved into Medicine Tail Coulee with companies C, E, F, I and L. He sent Companies E and F under Capt. George Yates in column down the coulee towards the Little Bighorn River while Custer and Companies C, I and L under Capt. Myles W. Keogh moved up the north slope of the coulee. Yates' battalion met resistance. A brief firefight occurred at the ford; casualties were light on both sides. Despite the light pressure, Yates turned back, heading up the westward slopes of Deep Coulee. As Yates fell back, Lakota and Cheyenne forces organized an assault across the river, pursuing Companies E and F up Deep Coulee. At this point, Keogh's three companies engaged from the slopes between Medicine Tail Coulee and Deep Ravine, holding off warriors as Yates' battalion withdrew to the slopes around Calhoun Hill. Keogh also withdrew under fire and joined Yates atop Calhoun Hill. Archeological evidence indicates that this fighting was relatively light although losses did occur.³⁵

At this point in the battle, movements of the Seventh Cavalry forces confined the majority of the fighting to within the present district boundaries, although much of the maneuvering on the part of the Indians took place at or beyond those boundaries. With Custer's men concentrated on Calhoun Hill, Indian warriors moved across Medicine Tail Ford. Many Cheyenne and Hunkpapa crossed the river farther downstream and moved up Deep Ravine and Calhoun Coulee to attack, using the brush in the river bottom and the ravine as cover. The warriors moving up Deep Ravine threatened Custer's right flank, so he sent Company C under Capt. Thomas W. Custer in a mounted assault down the ravine. The charge failed, and Lt. Calhoun split his company to cover Capt. Custer's retreat, As Company

³⁴ Martini quotation from testimony printed in June 1923 issue of *Cavalry Journal*, reprinted in Charles Windolph, *I Fought with Custer: The Story of Sergeant Windolph, Last Survivor of the Battle of the Little Bighorn*, 3rd ed., Frazier and Robert Hunt, eds., (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987), 86; 'bucks' was a common term used by whites to describe male American Indians of warrior-age.

³⁵ Robert M. Utley, *Little Bighorn Battlefield: A History and Guide to the Battle of the Little Bighorn*, Handbook 132, (Washington, D.C.: Division of Publications, National Park Service, 1994), 57-62; Douglas D. Scott, *Uncovering History: The Legacy of Archeological Investigations at the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument, Montana*, Technical Report No. 124, (Lincoln: Midwest Archeological Center, National Park Service, 2010), 72-75.

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C dismounted and formed a skirmish line at the top of the ravine, Lamé White Man of the Cheyenne led an attack that overran and routed the troopers back to Calhoun Hill.³⁶

While the reasons for the deployments vary, it is clear that these elements of the Seventh Cavalry attempted to secure the ridge-tops surrounding Calhoun Hill to counter the increasing fire from Deep Coulee, Calhoun Coulee Greasy Grass Ridge, and Henry Ridge (also called Henryville). Companies C and L deployed atop Calhoun Hill to defend against the warrior's advance up Deep Coulee while Company I deployed on the east side of Battle Ridge (also called Custer Ridge) below the crest. Yates' Companies E and F moved farther to the north, crossing Last Stand Hill and up the Custer Ridge Extension. However, they encountered attacks from all directions and heavy fire from the east, compelling them to fall back to the area around Last Stand Hill. With both battalions pinned down, groups of warriors from the village maintained a distance, firing while dismounted from behind hillocks, sagebrush clumps, tall grass and depressions in the terrain.³⁷

The five companies of troopers did not hold their positions for long. Crossing farther downstream and sweeping northeast in a wide arc, a large body of warriors including a band of Cheyenne under Wolf Tooth struck at Yates' battalion and moved to surround Keogh's troopers. Custer's five companies found themselves pinned down by fire from Lakota and Cheyenne forces attacking from the south and west, various warriors attacking from the north and east, and an attack led by Crazy Horse up Deep Ravine to Calhoun Hill. Many troopers shot their horses to make temporary breastworks while Lakota warriors directed by Gall shot at the horse-holders of the Seventh and stampeded many of the horses. A group of suicide warriors charged the troopers from the river, engaging in hand-to-hand combat. Although soldiers killed or mortally wounded all the suicide warriors, they gave momentum to Lakota and Cheyenne warriors who moved in to finish off the troopers. Gall led several impassioned charges on trooper positions to exact revenge for his killed wives and children. Lamé White Man, a chief of the Cheyenne, charged into the midst of the troops near the center of their position crying "young men, come now with me and show yourselves to be brave," breaking the cavalrymen's lines but dying in the process. Crazy Horse took advantage of this momentum and continued to press the warriors around him into charges that chipped away at the Seventh's positions. Wolf Tooth's warriors pressured from the east as others following the suicide warriors pushed from the west. At this point, much of the close-quarter fighting was desperate. Oglala Lakota Black Elk recalled seeing "warriors flying all around me like shadows, and the noise of all those hoofs and guns and cries was so loud it seemed quiet in there and the voices seemed to be on top of the cloud. It was like a bad dream." Many of Keogh's men retreated to Horse-Holder's Ravine where they were annihilated. The survivors of Keogh's battalion joined Companies E and F on-top of Last Stand Hill where they fought off encroaching Lakota, Cheyenne and Arapahoe warriors for up to two hours before all were killed. Some troopers attempted an escape down Deep Ravine during this phase, but the surrounding warriors made quick work of them. Moving up Deep Ravine, Hunkpapa Iron Hawk recalled that troopers began "running down hill right towards us...nearly all of them were afoot." Iron Hawk and his comrades kept fighting until "the soldiers were all rubbed out there and scattered around."³⁸

Following the combat, family members of those Indians killed or wounded removed bodies and aided the injured. Black Elk claimed that in the aftermath, he could "smell nothing but blood" from the dead warriors, troopers and horses. Those warriors remaining unhurt rode southward to engage the surrounded command of Maj. Reno, expecting to wipe them out as well.³⁹

³⁶ Utley, *Little Bighorn Battlefield*, 62-67; Stands in Timber and Liberty, 198-99; Bray, *Crazy Horse*, 227.

³⁷ Utley, *Little Bighorn Battlefield*, 67; Scott, *Uncovering History*, 78-83.

³⁸ Black Elk and Iron Hawk quotations from Nicholas Black Elk, ed., *Black Elk Speaks: Being the Life Story of a Holy Man of the Oglala Sioux*, 21st Century ed. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000), 88, 94; Utley, *Little Bighorn Battlefield*, 67-68; Stands in Timber and Liberty, 199-201; Bray, *Crazy Horse*, 229; Robert W. Larson, *Gall: Lakota War Chief*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007), 127-35; Richard G. Hardorff, *Lakota Recollections of the Custer Fight: New Sources of Indian-Military History*, 2nd printing, (Spokane: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1991), 33; Thomas B. Marquis, *Custer on the Little Bighorn*, (Lodi, CA: End-Kian Publishing, 1969), 39.

³⁹ Black Elk, *Black Elk Speaks*, 95-96.

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Archeological Site – The Lakota and Cheyenne Defeat Custer

The archeological resources of the battlefield fall under the American Indian Wars - Archeological Site Property Type of the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument MPDF. Their significance rests in the points listed in that document and their ability to augment the historical narrative described above under the Battle Site significance.

Last Stand Hill (Historic Site)

Last Stand Hill falls under the War Department – Monuments and Markers property type and is significant under Criterion A for its military significance. In particular, this site reflects the concentrated attention on Lt. Col. George A. Custer and his men by patrons and veterans of the Indian Wars. After the battle, this site became the center of the battlefield's memorial landscape. The granite obelisk in memory of the Seventh Cavalry became a prominent attraction for tourists in the American West and students of the American Indian Wars. On the southern slope of 'Last Stand Hill,' a cluster of fifty-two marble markers signifies the location where the relief column under Gibbon and Terry found Custer and at least twenty-seven of his men on June 27th, 1876. More than any other, this location has captured the attention of scholars and American Indian Wars enthusiasts since the battle's conclusion and remains a focal point of interpretation at Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument.

Custer National Cemetery (Historic Site)

The significance of Custer National Cemetery is detailed in the MPDF. The following paragraphs elaborate on the significance of the Superintendent's House or "Stone House," a component of the National Cemetery.

Superintendent's House / Stone House: This building falls under the War Department Era Buildings and Structures Property Type. It is significant at the local level under Criterion C as one of the only remaining examples of military architecture in southeast Montana. Until its construction in 1893, any maintenance of the battlefield and cemetery came from the post commander at Fort Custer. With Andrew Grover's appointment as full-time superintendent, the War Department made preparations for permanent stewardship. While crews built the Stone House, Grover resided in a tent and later, a temporary frame house.⁴⁰

Because of the limited nature of War Department development at Custer Battlefield National Cemetery, the Stone House represents the only prominent example of military architecture at the site. Like many western posts of the time, it attempted to balance the rigidity of military architectural standards established in Washington D.C with the realities of minimal infrastructure and limited materials. The difficulty of transporting the standard brick to outposts in the far west limited Grover to local stone and timber available from Crow Agency, Hardin or Billings. The railroad tracks that now lay in the valley did not arrive until a year after the construction of the Stone House. For several decades following its completion, the Stone House represented the only significant structure other than the Seventh Cavalry Memorial at the battlefield. However, as the cemetery's irrigation infrastructure grew and visitation increased, the Stone House became one of many significant resources in the District.⁴¹

⁴⁰ This paragraph adapted from U.S. Department of the Interior, "Partial Inventory – Custer Battlefield Historic District," Section 8, page 2.

⁴¹ For discussion of frontier post architecture, see Alison K. Hoagland, *Army Architecture in the West: Forts Laramie, Bridger, and D.A. Russell, 1849-1912* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004).

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Seventh Cavalry Markers

--- Significance detailed in MPDF

1938 Pump House and Road

The 1938 concrete pump house is significant under the “War Department – Buildings and Structures” property type for contributions to cemetery landscape maintenance. Because the War Department established the cemetery on the uplands overlooking the Little Bighorn Valley, irrigation would have to support any landscaping. As the War Department attempted to reshape the area around Cemetery Ridge into an eastern image of a national cemetery with green lawns and spruce trees lining the edges, water scarcity hampered their efforts. In 1913, the agency installed the first pump house along the river floodplain below the cemetery, but its capacity did not allow for irrigation. By 1938, ambitious re-landscaping of the cemetery necessitated a bigger pump, and the War Department consequently constructed this building as a means to provide it. In 1961, a Mission 66 project constructed a new pump house to the south and west, rendering the 1938 pump house obsolete. However, during its period of use, it provided the means to establish the traditional national cemetery landscape at the battlefield

Battlefield Tour Road Route

The Battlefield Tour Road route falls under the War Department – Roads and Trails property type. Its significance is detailed in the MPDF.

National Cemetery Boundary Markers and Fence

Built in 1889, these markers are significant under the “War Department – Buildings and Structures” property type as the first permanent boundary markers for the final cemetery reservation. Once President Grover Cleveland established the cemetery’s one-square mile boundary, the agency needed to delineate a boundary to avoid land-use conflicts. War Department established these iron posts to mark that boundary then erected a barbed-wire fence in 1891 to limit trespassing and grazing within the cemetery.

Indian Memorial

--- Significance detailed in MPDF and individual 10-900 nomination form.

Memorial Cairns

--- Significance detailed in MPDF; location classified.

Keogh/Crazy Horse Trail

In use since the War Department era, the Keogh/Crazy Horse trail is significant under the “American Indian Wars- Battle Sites” property type. The trail follows routes of soldiers and warriors during the fight. The Keogh/Crazy Horse trail extends from Battle Ridge to the known Keogh route. Fierce fighting in the ravines, coulees and along the ridges and hilltops ultimately ended with the combined American Indian force annihilating the five companies of the Seventh. Visitor use during the War Department era established each of these trails as ‘social’ or ‘desire’ paths.

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Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

Shortly after news spread of the annihilation of Lt. Col. George A. Custer and five companies of the Seventh Cavalry at the Battle of the Little Bighorn, military and government officials made plans for a memorial to those killed in the line of duty. Newspaper editors, high-ranking Army officers, private citizens, and relatives of men who died in the Battle pressed Congress and the Army to either retrieve the soldiers' remains or establish a National Cemetery in the valley so that the graves of the dead could be maintained properly.

On August 1, 1879, by General Order Number 78, Headquarters of the Army, the President officially designated the battlefield as a National Cemetery of the fourth class. The order also stated that the War Department would define the cemetery's boundaries upon completion of a survey. While the War Department formalized plans for transforming the battlefield into a National Cemetery, a simultaneous action spurred by Quartermaster General Montgomery C. Meigs called for the erection of a stone memorial to the fallen troops. His initial plan specified a truncated stone memorial at an estimated cost of \$1,000. The War Department authorized the memorial shaft along with the creation of the National Cemetery, but the military could not erect the monument until 1881. In the interim, a cordwood monument served a dual function--commemorating the dead and marking the common grave for the bones, both human and animal.

Following a difficult cross-country trip, in July 1881, crews set the Seventh Cavalry Memorial in place. The War Department ordered Lieutenant C.F. Roe and Troop M, Second Cavalry, to place the memorial and dig a trench around the base for the reinterment of the fallen troopers. This memorial stands on the crest of a hill, six feet from where Gibbon and Terry's men found Custer's remains. In 1890, cemetery staff beveled the edges of the monument because of massive chipping.

On December 7, 1886, President Grover Cleveland signed Executive Order 337443 establishing the roughly one square mile boundary for the Custer Battlefield National Cemetery. Shortly after, the War Department opened an active military cemetery of 6.21 acres. Originally intended for Indian War dead, the War Department soon altered the initial design to accommodate the burials of veterans of the Spanish-American War, both World Wars, and the Vietnam conflict. Some of the remains buried in the cemetery included Indian scouts who served in the American Indian Wars. Among those lying in the cemetery who possess historical significance are Captain William Judd Fetterman and his entire command killed in the Fetterman Fight on December 7, 1866, Curley, one of Custer's Indian scouts, and Lieutenant John J. Crittenden, whose body remained in its battlefield grave for 56 years until 1932 when his body was removed to the National Cemetery.⁴²

Between 1963 and 1966, the monument added Sections E and F which are at the northwestern end of the cemetery grounds near the Superintendent's House. Park staff completed sections G and H on the southwestern corner in 1967, rebuilding the iron fence and honeysuckle hedge to accommodate for this expansion. At the northwestern edge of this addition is a round drive circle matching the area around the flagpole in the original cemetery section.⁴³

9. Major Bibliographical References

⁴² The preceding paragraphs have been adapted from the 1987 "Partial Inventory – Custer Historic District" nomination text.

⁴³ The dates for Section E and F additions extrapolated from two project drawings from the 1960s. A Site Development Plan from 1963 shows plans to obliterate the garage and maintenance quarters attached to the Superintendent's House as well as the Rostrum at the northern corner of the cemetery plot. By June of 1966, Sections E and F appear on the initial design plans for the addition of sections G and H, indicating the monument added and developed them sometime in that period. See U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service, "Site Development," Drawing No. 3007, Sept. 9, 1963, and "Cemetery Restoration – 900 Sites," Drawing No. 3025, June 1, 1966, Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument, Technical Information Center (hereafter NPS-TIC).

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Books

Black Elk, Nicholas. *Black Elk Speaks: Being the Life Story of a Holy Man of the Oglala Sioux*, 21st Century ed. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000.
Greene, Jerome A. *Stricken Field: The Little Bighorn Since 1876*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008.
Hardorff, Richard G. *Lakota Recollections of the Custer Fight: New Sources of Indian-Military History*, 2nd print. Spokane: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1991.
Hoagland, Alison K. *Army Architecture in the West: Forts Laramie, Bridger, and D.A. Russell, 1849-1912*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004.
Larson, Robert W. *Gall: Lakota War Chief*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007.
Marquis, Thomas B. *Custer on the Little Bighorn*. Lodi, CA: End-Kian Publishing, 1969.
Rickey, Don, Jr. *History of Custer Battlefield*. Fort Collins: Old Army Press, 2005 (orig. 1967).
Scott, Douglas D., Richard A. Fox, Jr., Melissa A. Connor and Dick Harmon. *Archaeological Perspectives on the Battle of the Little Bighorn*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989.
Stands in Timber, John, and Margot Liberty. *Cheyenne Memories*, 2nd ed. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998.
Utley, Robert M. *Little Bighorn Battlefield: A History and Guide to the Battle of the Little Bighorn Handbook* 132, Washington, D.C.: Division of Publications, National Park Service, 1994.
Robert M. Utley. *Sitting Bull: The Life and Times of an American Patriot*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1993.
Windolph, Charles. *I Fought with Custer: The Story of Sergeant Windolph, Last Survivor of the Battle of the Little Bighorn*, 3rd ed., Frazier and Robert Hunt, eds. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987.

Reports and Bulletins

U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. *A Report of Archaeological Investigations at the Reno-Benteen Site, Custer Battlefield National Monument, June 2 – July 1 1958*, by Robert T. Bray. Midwest Archaeological Center. Omaha, Neb., 1958.
———. *Uncovering History: The Legacy of Archeological Investigations at the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument, Montana*, by Douglas D. Scott. Technical Report No. 124. Midwest Archeological Center. Lincoln, Neb., 2010.
———. *DRAFT Vegetation Classification and Mapping Project Report, Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument*, by P. Rice, W. Gustafson, E. W. Schweiger, D. Manier, D. Shorrock, C. Lea and B. Frakes. Natural Resource Technical Report NPS/XXXX/NRTR—20XX/XXX. Fort Collins, Colo., 2011.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

Primary location of additional data:

Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument -
Historic District West

Bighorn, MT

Name of Property

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

☐ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☒ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 13 North 310750 5049540
Zone Easting Northing

3 13 North 310560 5047400
Zone Easting Northing

2 13 North 311640 5048110
Zone Easting Northing

4 13 North 309440 5048610
Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The Historic District West boundary is delineated by an irregular rectangle whose vertices are marked by the following UTM reference points: A 13 310750 5049540, B 13 311640 5048110, C 13 310560 5047400, and D 13 309440 5048610. The district boundary follows the National Monument boundary.

Secretary of War defined the western boundary of federal land to be the east bank of the Little Bighorn River in 1886. A memo from the Solicitor General's office in 2007 further clarified that the meander boundary is marked by the ordinary high water mark, typically determined as "where the presence and action of the water marks the soil of the riverbed as distinctive with respect to vegetation." (citation pending).

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries delineated above correspond to the management boundaries of Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument. President James A. Garfield first established the present reservation boundaries in 1886, limiting the tract due to concern over previously allotted Crow Nation land on the battlefield. Congress clarified these boundaries in 1930 (P.L. 71-129, 46 Stat. 169). Since that time, no changes in the administrative boundary of this reservation have been made, although the fence has been moved closer to the riverbank to reduce confusion. While there are sites of interest and archeological resources that lay outside the current boundary, modifications of the historic district boundary would require the consent and approval of both the Crow Nation and the private landholders that would fall within the new boundary. Such consent has not been sought nor given.

Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument -
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jim Bertolini – Author/Researcher ; Janet Ore – Principal Investigator
organization Public Lands History Center – Colorado State University date _____
street & number Aylesworth C104 telephone 970-491-6130
city or town Fort Collins state CO zip code 80523
e-mail Ajimbert1210@gmail.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

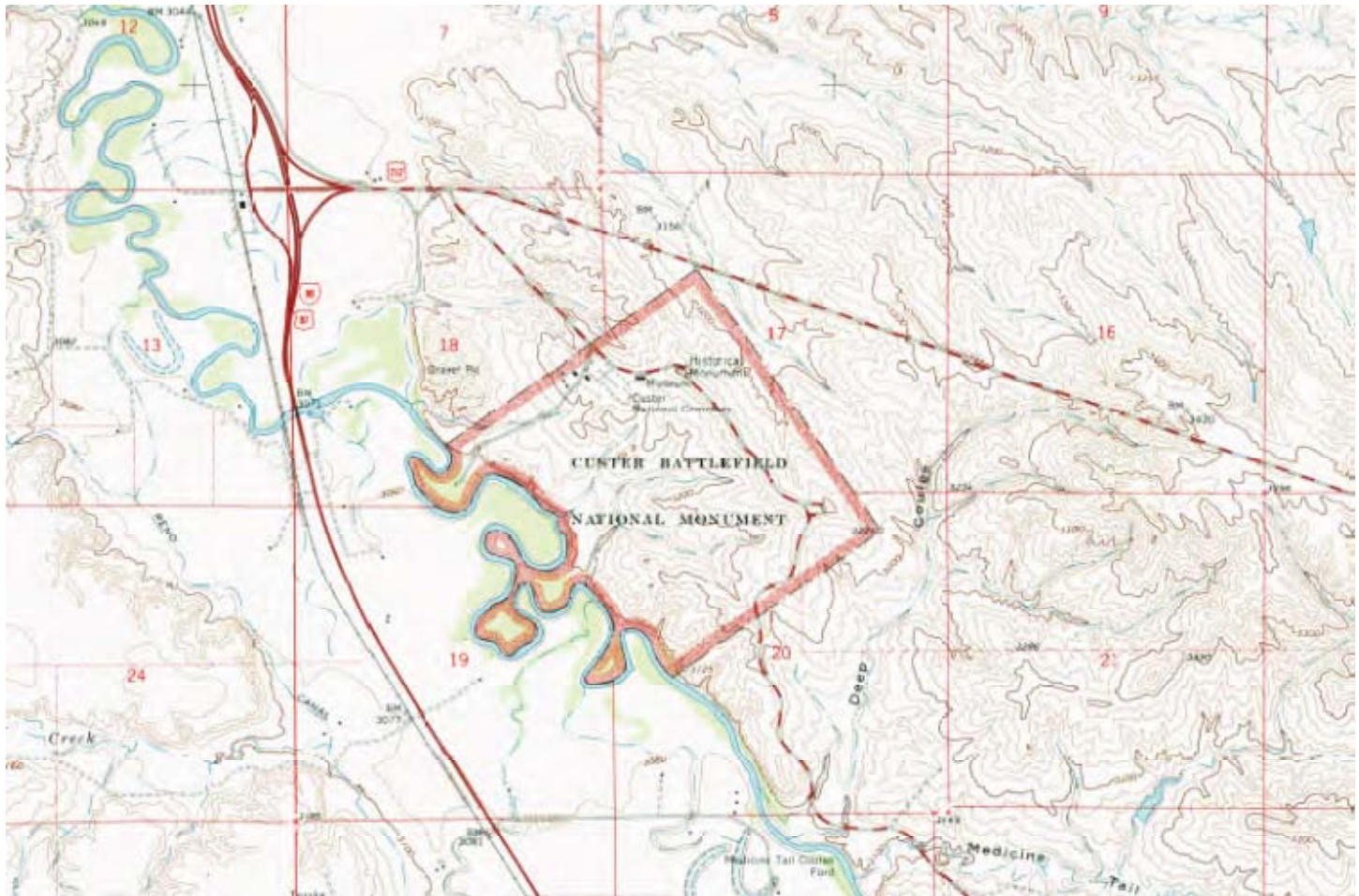
- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

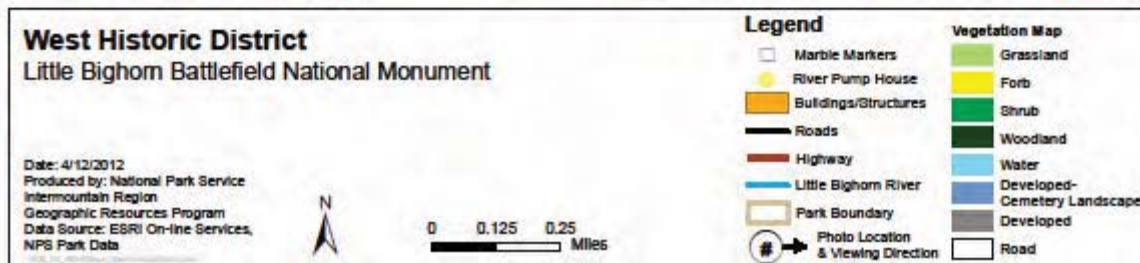
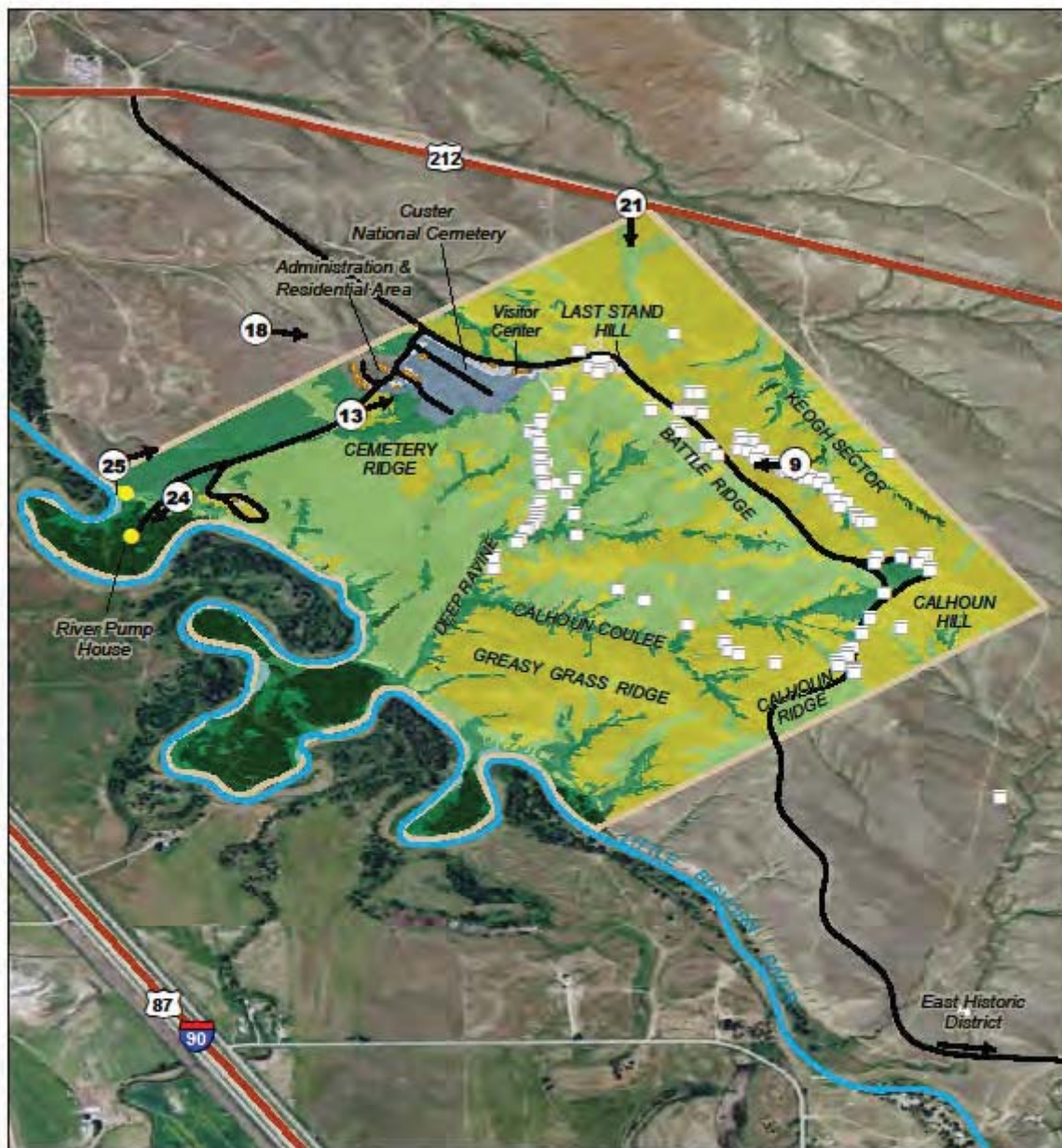
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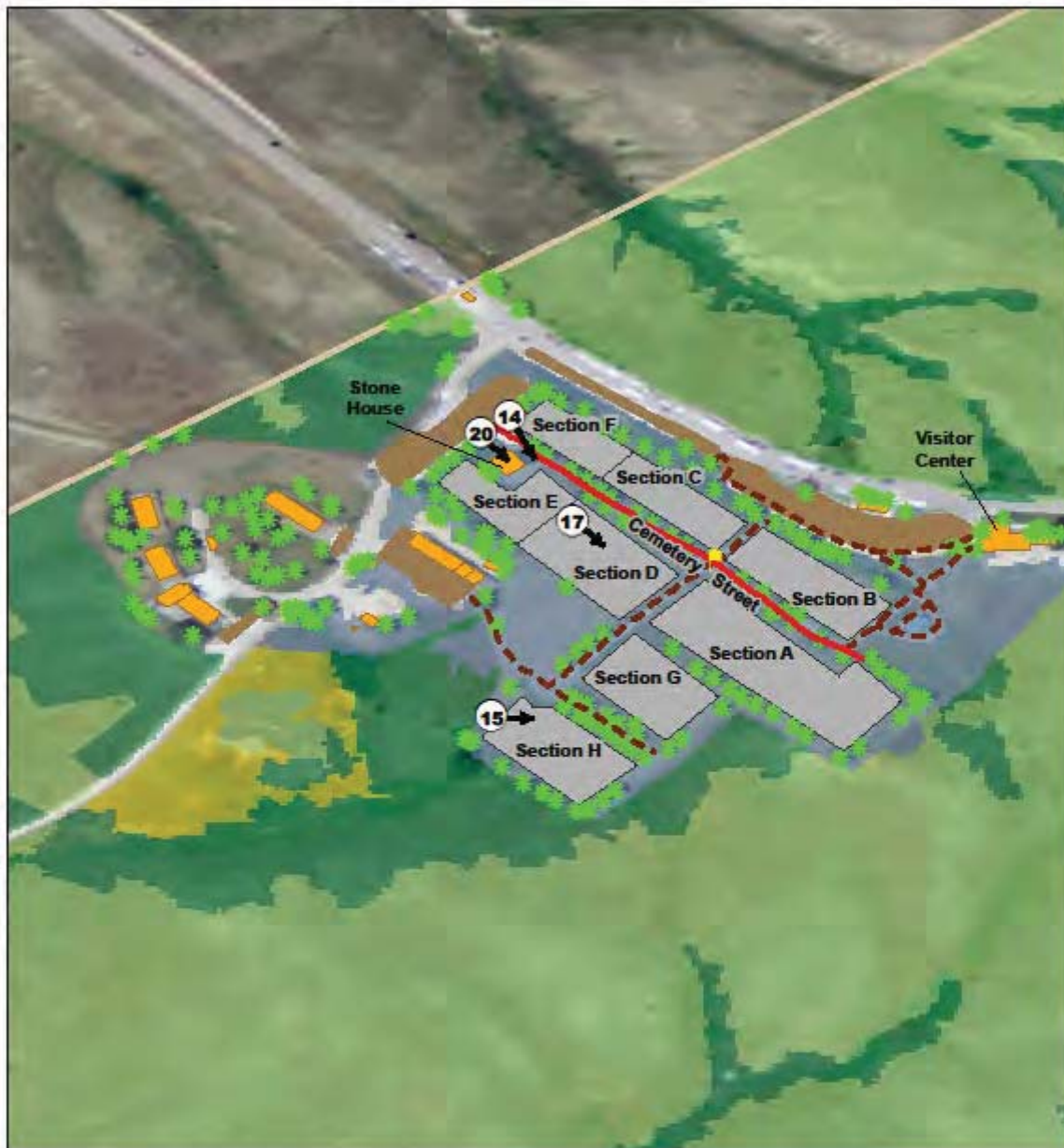
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West Historic District - National Cemetery
 Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument

Date: 4/12/2012
 Produced by: National Park Service
 Intermountain Region
 Geographic Resources Program
 Data Source: ESRI On-line Services,
 NPS Park Data



0 0.025 0.05
 Miles

Legend

- Flagpole
- Tree/Shrub
- Gravestone Sections
- Buildings/Structures
- Cemetery Street
- Trails
- Parking
- Park Boundary

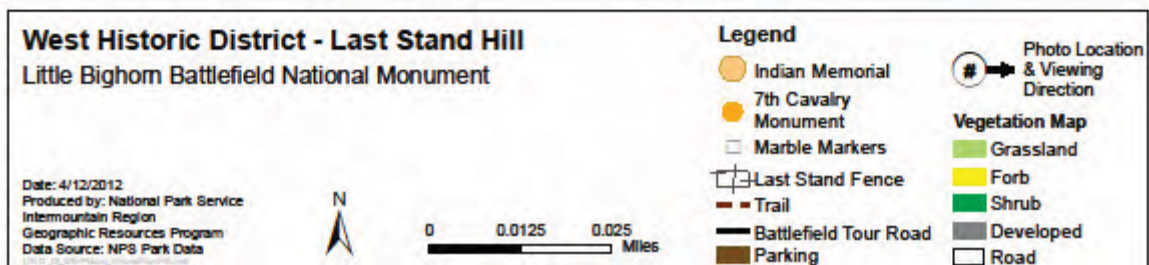
Vegetation Map

- Grassland
- Forb
- Shrub
- Developed-
Cemetery Landscape
- Developed
- Road

Photo
 Location
 & Viewing
 Direction

Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument -
Historic District West
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Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument -
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Name of Property

Bighorn, MT

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Name of Property: **Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument**

City or Vicinity: **near Crow Agency**

County: **Bighorn** State: **MT**

Photographer: **Jim Bertolini (unless otherwise stated)**

Date Photographed: **see below, Photos 1-26**

Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument -
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1. Custer Monument, looking west, 6-15-2011

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2. "F.J. Haynes and Curley (Crow Indian Scout), and Custer Monument, MT," 1882, F. Jay Haynes. Photo # H-238, Haynes Foundation Collection, Montana State Historical Society.

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3. Last Stand Hill and Trail, looking east, 6-15-2011.

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4. LIBI 2468A, Last Stand Hill, 1913, Rodman Wanamaker and Joseph Dixon, Little Bighorn Battlefield NM Archives.

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5. First cordwood monument at Last Stand Hill site, 1879, Stephen J. Morrow, Photo #981-349, Montana State Historical Society Archives.

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6. Last Stand Hill markers looking south, 1894, F. Jay Haynes, Photo #H-3152, Montana State Historical Society Archives.

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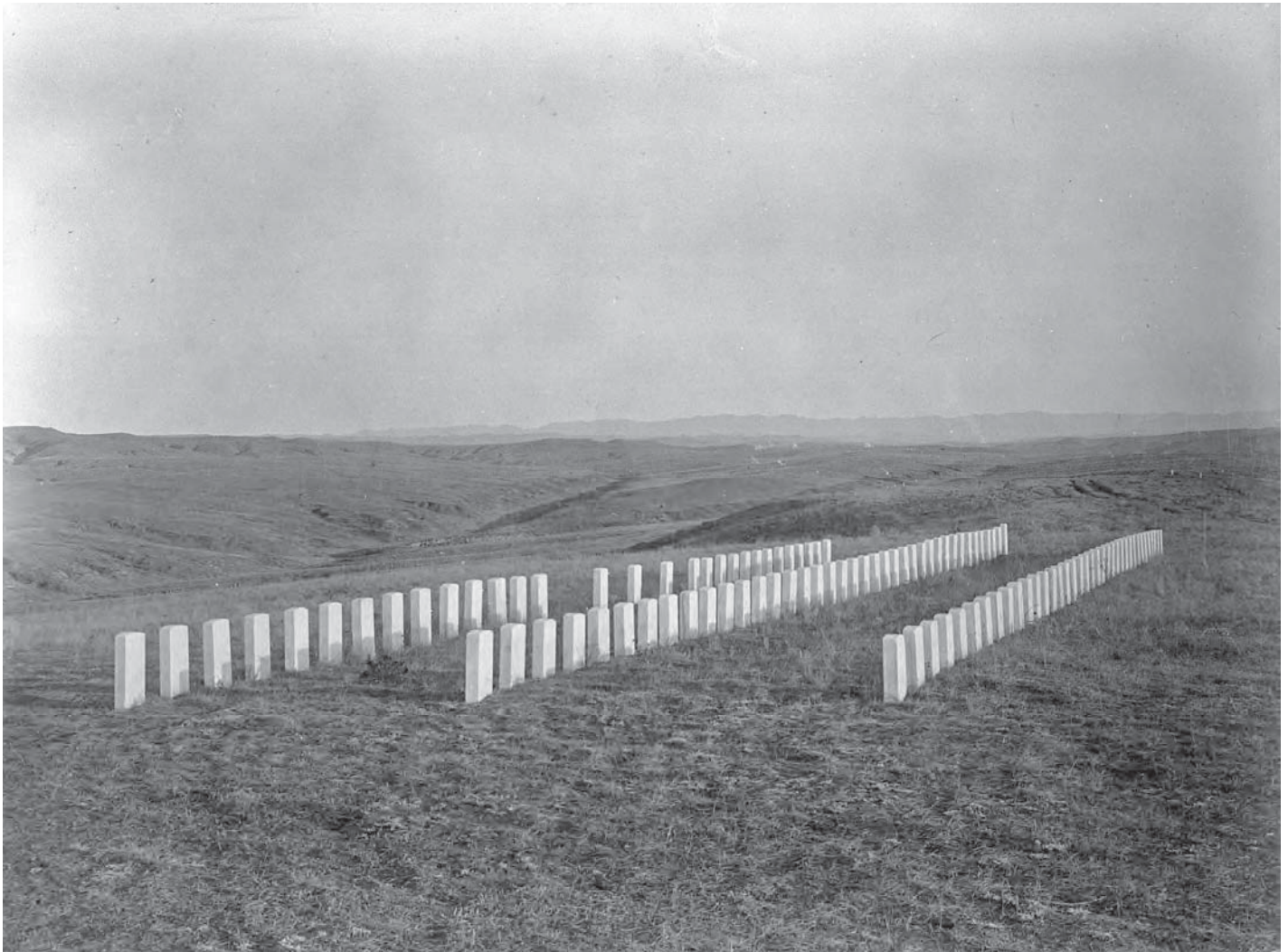
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7. Last Stand Hill showing access road from Little Bighorn River, 1896, Christian Barthelmess, Photo #Pac 95-68 C417, Montana State Historical Society Archives.

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8. Fort Phil Kearny burials north of Seventh Cavalry Monument (moved to the cemetery in 1927), ca. 1896, Christian Barthelmess, Photo #PAC 95-68 C420, Montana State Historical Society Archives.

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9. Keogh Trail end looking W towards Tour Road, 6-16-2011.

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10. LIBI A 381-1567, New Keogh Marker and cluster, photographer and date unknown, Little Bighorn Battlefield NM Archives.

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11. LIBI 10958, Keogh Sector graves looking west, ca. 1910s, photographer unknown, Little Bighorn Battlefield NM Archives.

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12. LIBI 11265, Keogh Sector graves looking east, 1909, Walter Camp, Little Bighorn Battlefield NM Archives.

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13. Residential Area and National Cemetery from below looking northeast, 6-14-2011.

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14. Custer National Cemetery from Main Entrance looking southeast, 6-14-2011.

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15. Custer National Cemetery, Section H (foreground) and Section G (background), looking east, 6-14-2011.

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Name of Property

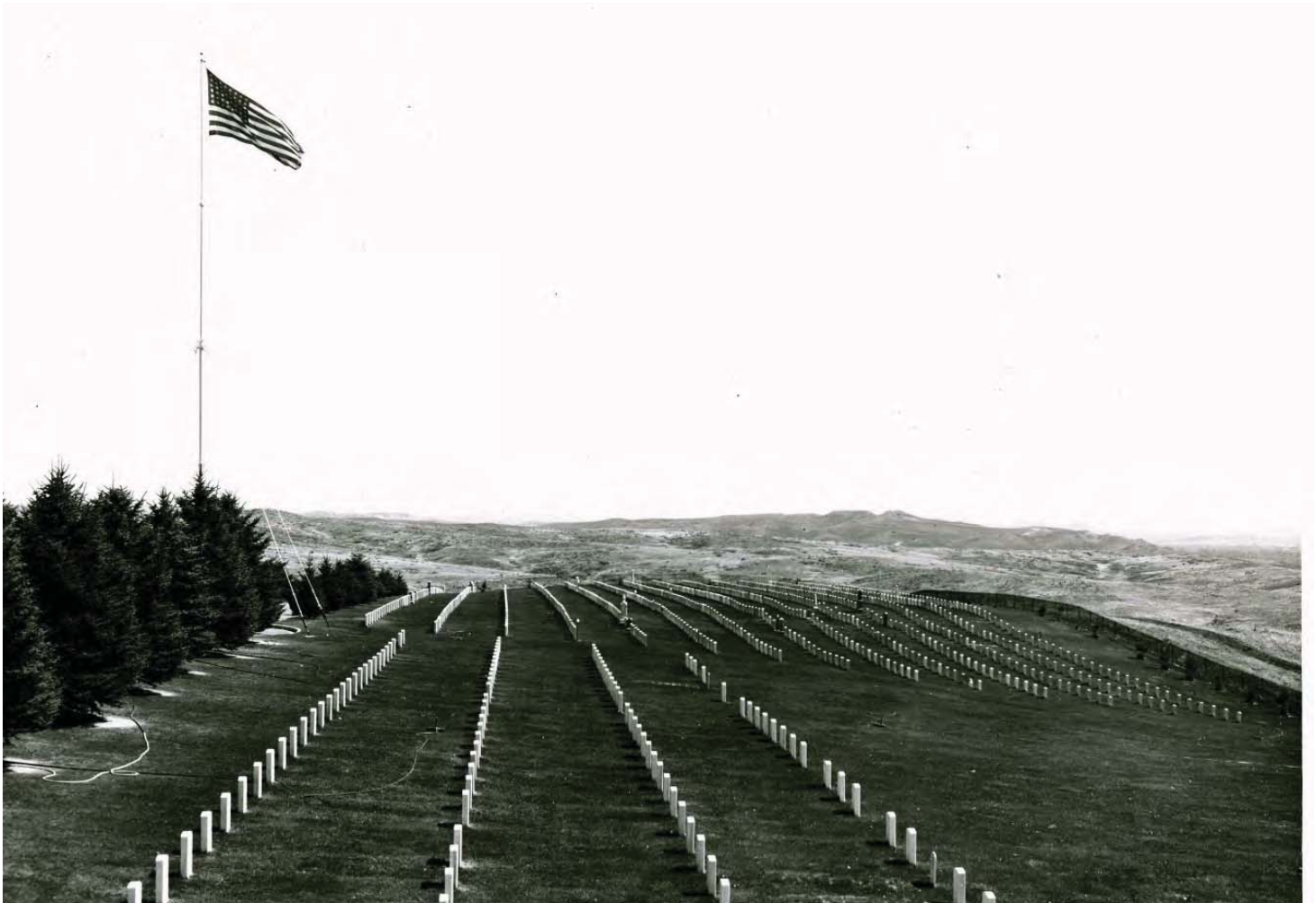
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16. LIBI 16190 – Custer National Cemetery – date and photographer unknown, Little Bighorn Battlefield NM Archives.

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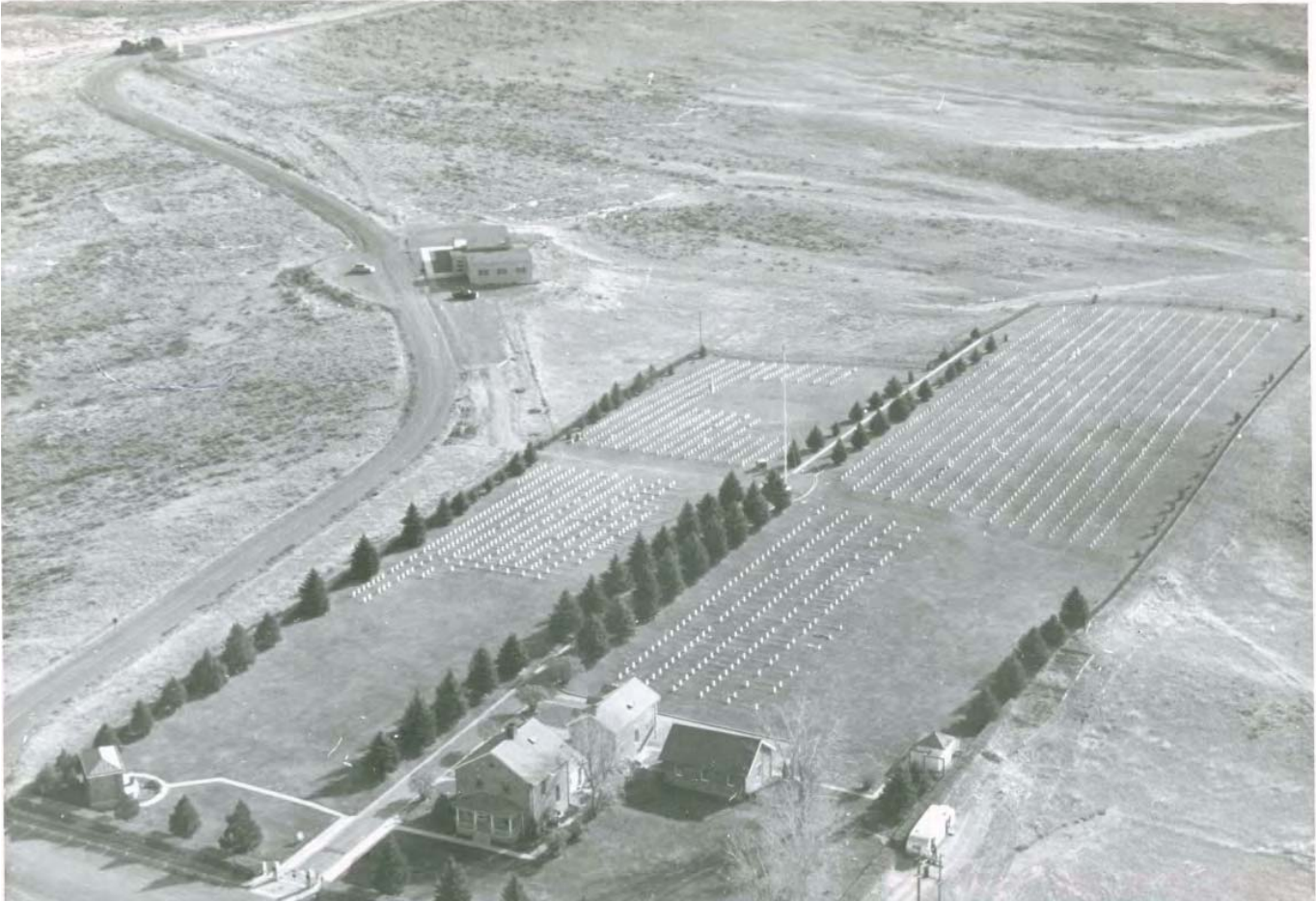
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17. LIBI 16125 Custer National Cemetery Sections A and D, ca. mid-1950s, photographer unknown, Little Bighorn Battlefield NM Archives.

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18. LIBI 16215 Aerial view of Custer National Cemetery, ca. 1951-52, photographer unknown, Little Bighorn Battlefield NM Archives.

Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument -
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19. Custer National Cemetery, 1896, Christian Barthelmess, Photo #PAC 95-68 C423, Montana State Historical Society Archives.

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20. Superintendent's House / Stone House, façade, June 1963, John N. DeHaas, Jr., File # LIBI 381 P5, National Park Service Technical Information Center.

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21. Northern boundary marker, 6-15-2011.

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22. National Cemetery and Visitor Center from Last Stand Hill, 6-15-2011.

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23. LIBI 381-460, Visitor Center and Cemetery from Last Stand Hill, ca. 1952-65, photographer unknown, Little Bighorn Battlefield NM Archives.

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24. A. 381-931 Pump House construction, ca. 1961, photographer unknown, Little Bighorn Battlefield NM Archives.

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25. 1938 Pump House, from "New Pump House," Bldg. No. 7, no date, List of Classified Structures Inventory Folder, White Swan Memorial Library, Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument (hereafter LIBI-LCS).

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26. LIBI A381-1593, 1983 Grassfire, August 10, 1983, photographer unknown, Little Bighorn Battlefield NM Archives.

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27. Custer National Cemetery and Battlefield looking west, 1926, L.A. Huffman, Photo #981-197, Montana State Historical Society Archives.

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28. Indian Memorial viewed from the Tour Road looking north, 2009, Bob Reece.

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29. Mato Heton / Bear With Horns marker, June 2011.

Property Owner:

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

name **National Park Service, Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument**

street & number **Superintendent, Little Bighorn Battlefield NM,
P. O. Box 39**

telephone

city or town **Crow Agency**

state **MT**

zip code **59022**

Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument -
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Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.