

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JUL 28 1980

DATE ENTERED MAR 17 1981

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Big Spring Historic District

AND/OR COMMON

Big Spring State Park

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

E of Van Buren on  
Missouri Route 103

CITY, TOWN

Van Buren

VICINITY OF

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

#8 Hon. Richard Ichord #10

STATE

Missouri

CODE

29

COUNTY

Carter

CODE

035

**3 CLASSIFICATION****CATEGORY**☒ DISTRICT☐ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT**OWNERSHIP**☒ PUBLIC☐ PRIVATE☐ BOTH**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED**STATUS**☒ OCCUPIED☐ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS**ACCESSIBLE**☐ YES: RESTRICTED☒ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO**PRESENT USE**☐ AGRICULTURE☐ COMMERCIAL☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☐ MUSEUM☒ PARK☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ OTHER:**4 AGENCY**

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

Ozark National Scenic Riverways

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Van Buren

VICINITY OF

STATE

Missouri 63965

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, TC. Office of Recorder of Deeds, Carter County Courthouse

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Courthouse Square

CITY, TOWN

Van Buren

STATE

Missouri 63965

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

## 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Big Spring Historic District, now in the Ozark National Scenic Riverways, was part of Big Spring State Park and is on the west bank of the Current River, four miles below Van Buren, Missouri. Besides Big Spring, there are twenty-six structures, roads and recreation facilities. The east bank of the branch formed by Big Spring is developed for recreation with parking areas, a shelter house, new museum, crafts exhibit, play areas and restrooms. A new vehicle and pedestrian bridge connects it with an acre-size "playfield" around which park buildings are grouped. Overlooking the spring branch is the dining lodge; west of it, the first museum, and on a ridge above, rental cabins. Service buildings are further west, near the park entrance, screened by landscaping. Regular maintenance has contained deterioration resulting from the constant use to which they have been subjected for forty years. All structures are in excellent condition.

The following is an inventory:

Big Spring is the point of major public interest. Many claims have been made as to size, flow and significance of Big Spring. The most reliable appears to be that of the Missouri Geological Survey which gauged the discharge at an average of 250,000,000 gallons of water a day. A maximum daily flow has been measured at 711,000,000 gallons. It is exceeded only by an upper spring of Silver Springs, Ocala, Florida.

Water enters this spring through conduits in a great system of caves that extends for miles north and west. An estimated 175 tons of minerals a day are eroded by the water. It gushes forth in a foaming cataract at the foot of a 100' high cliff of Gasconade dolomite and tumbles five feet into a pool a hundred yards in diameter. The stream created by this spring is a hundred feet wide and several feet deep, and joins the Current River a quarter of a mile downstream. Water in the spring branch is a constant 55° and has an indigo tint.

Building 401 is a 28'8" x 28'9" ell-shaped single-story rental cabin at the east end of a road along the crest of a 200' high bluff above the central playfield area.

**Exterior:** The roof forms intersecting gables and is covered with brown asphalt shingles. A triangular limestone chimney is in an intersection of the angle. All foundations are of coursed cut stone and walls exposed timber with cut stone infills. All exposed wood is stained.

**Openings:** Two doors and seven 6-light casement windows.

**Interior:** Divided into three rooms, a kitchenette, and a bath. Two of the rooms are bedroom-sitting rooms and have fireplace openings. Interior walls are stone and floors concrete covered with composition tile. All woodwork is stained brown.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JUL 28 1980

DATE ENTERED MAR 17 1981

BIG SPRING HISTORIC DISTRICT

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 1

Building 402 is a 15'9" x 28' single-story rental cabin, located about 100' west of cabin #401.

Exterior: The gable roof is covered with brown asphalt shingles. A coursed cut outside limestone chimney is located opposite the screened porch entrance. Foundations are coursed cut stone, and walls exposed timber with stone infills. All woodwork is stained brown.

Openings: Fourteen 6-light casement windows and one entrance door.

Interior: There is a living-bedroom with stone fireplace, kitchenette and bath. Interior walls are limestone and floors concrete covered with tile. All woodwork is stained brown.

Building 403: Same as building #402.

Building 404 is a 15'2" x 30'8" single-story rental cabin.

Exterior: The gable roof is covered with brown-stained sawn wood shingles. A coursed cut limestone outside chimney is located opposite the entrance which is covered with a screened porch. All foundations are coursed cut limestone, walls exposed timber with cut stone infills. Exposed woodwork is stained brown.

Openings: Three doors and thirteen 6-light casement windows.

Interior: There are two bedrooms, a kitchenette and a bath. All interior walls are varnished wood and floors hardwood.

Building 405: Same as building #406.

Building 406 is a single-story 12'6" x 28'3" rental cabin.

Exterior: The gable roof is covered with brown asphalt shingles. A coursed cut limestone chimney is located at one end of the building and a screened porch at the entrance. All foundations are cut coursed limestone and walls covered with brown-stained sawn wood shingles.

Openings: Ten 6-light casement windows and two doors.

Interior: There are two bedrooms, a kitchenette and a bath. Interior walls are brown-stained wood.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JUL 28 1980  
DATE ENTERED MAR 17 1981

BIG SPRING HISTORIC DISTRICT

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

Building 407: Same as #406.

Building 408: Same as #406.

Building 409: Same as #406.

Building 410: Same as #406.

Building 411: Same as #406.

Building 412: Same as #406.

Building 413 is a 21' x 32' single-story rental cabin.

Exterior: The gable roof is covered with brown asphalt shingles. There is a coursed cut limestone outside chimney and a screened porch. All foundations are concrete and walls creosoted clapboard.

Openings: Twelve 6-light windows and two doors. Both doors open onto the screened porch.

Interior: This is divided into two rooms with baths. All walls are brown varnished wood and floor concrete covered with tile.

Building 414 is a 32' x 21' 1 1/2 story rental cabin.

Exterior: The gable roof is covered with brown asphalt shingles. There is a cut coursed limestone chimney and porch. The foundation and walls are of cut coursed limestone. All exterior woodwork is stained brown.

Openings: Twenty-four 6-light casement windows and three doors.

Interior: There are two bedrooms with baths, and a kitchenette. All walls are painted plaster, woodwork is stained brown and floors concrete, covered with tile.

Building 415 is a 25' x 27' single-story with basement rental cabin at the east end of the bluff.

Exterior: The gable roof is covered with green asphalt shingles. There is a cut limestone chimney and a screened porch. Foundations are concrete and walls creosoted clapboard.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	JUL 28 1980
DATE ENTERED	MAR 17 1981

BIG SPRING HISTORIC DISTRICT

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 3

Openings: Seven 6-light casement windows and three doors.

Interior: There is a full basement with concrete floor, above it are three rooms with baths. Interior walls are plaster and floor hardwood.

Building 416 is a 1 1/2 story 28' x 32' frame house west of the central play-field area.

Exterior: The gable roof is covered with brown-stained sawn wood shingles. Foundations are cut stone and walls brown-stained sawn shingles. An outside stone chimney and screened porch are attached.

Interior: There is a full basement with concrete. The first floor is divided into five rooms and a bath. Walls are knotty pine and floors hardwood.

Building 417 is a two story frame 25' x 50' barn-like service building in the service complex.

Exterior: The gable roof is covered with sawn wood shingles. Chimney and foundations are cut stone and walls creosoted tongue and groove siding. An outside wooden stair is attached to the north end.

Openings: There are three pairs of double-leaf barn doors along the east wall and two single doors in the south. Ten windows are on the first floor, none on the second.

Interior: The first floor is divided into 25' x 27' room and office, storeroom and bath. Interior partitions are painted plywood and floors concrete. A plywood partition floor separates the upper story into two storage areas.

Building 418 is a single-story frame 20'5" square paint storage shed.

Exterior: The gable roof is covered with brown asphalt shingles, foundations are mortared cobblestone and walls creosoted clapboards.

Openings: A single door and seven windows.

Interior: The interior is undivided; walls and ceiling are unpainted tongue and groove boards and floor wood.

Building 419 is a single-story frame 25'5" x 92' garage.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JUL 28 1980

DATE ENTERED

MAR 17 1981

BIG SPRING HISTORIC DISTRICT

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 4

Exterior: The gable roof is covered with brown asphalt shingles. Foundations are cut stone and walls brown clapboards.

Openings: Nine double leaf doors set in the south walls opposite each door as in a window, and two windows are in each end. The interior is undivided. It has a concrete floor.

Building 420 is a single-story "T"-shaped museum located on the south playfield loop road. The main block is 18' x 42' with two 9' x 12' wings.

Exterior: The roof forms intersecting gables and is covered with sawn wood shingles. Foundations are cut coursed limestone and walls brown-stained timbers.

Openings: Twenty-three 6-light casement windows and two pairs of doubleleafed doors are in the main block, single doors in each wing. Gable pediments are over the double door.

Interior: The interior is undivided with coursed stone walls and concrete floor. This building is now used for storage.

Building 422 is a single-story 31' x 122' dining lodge on a terrace overlooking the spring branch.

Exterior: The roof forms four intersecting gables and is covered with sawn wood shingles. There are two porches and four limestone chimneys. Walls are coursed cut stone.

Openings: Six doors and thirty-two 6-light casement windows.

Interior: The center block is the dining room. It has exposed ceiling beams and a large fireplace. The kitchen, a rental office and concession stand are in the wings. Floors are concrete.

Building 423 is a 14' x 53' single-story restroom on the main park road in the center of the district.

Exterior: The gable roof is covered with wood shingles and gable pediments are over both entrances. Exterior side walls are coursed cut stone, end walls half-timber. Screening each entrance are 5' high wood partitions. All exterior wood is painted brown.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	JUL 28 1980
DATE ENTERED	MAR 17 1981

BIG SPRING HISTORIC DISTRICT

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 5

Openings: Fifteen small square windows in groups of three; three groups between the entrance doors and one group in each end. Two doors are near the ends of the southern wall.

Interior: The interior is divided into three areas. Those at the ends are rest rooms divided by a service area. Walls are stone and floors concrete.

Building 425 is a single-story 41'6" x 21'6" shelter house, in a large picnic area about 100' east of the spring branch.

Exterior: The hip roof is covered with green asphalt shingles and foundations are concrete. All sides are open. Twelve evenly-spaced wood covered columns support the roof. All wood is stained brown.

Interior: The interior is undivided and has a concrete floor. A brick oven and fireplace is at the center of the north end.

Building 432 is a 20' x 22' single-story ranger station at the park entrance.

Exterior: The gable roof is covered with sawn wood shingles. There is a front porch and an outside cut stone chimney. Walls and foundations are coursed cut stone and gable ends exposed timber with stone infills.

Openings: Ten 6-light casement windows and two doors.

Interior: The interior is undivided. A bath is in a 4'5" x 9' rear projection. Interior walls are stone and floor concrete.

Building 443 is a 10' x 12' single-story pump house south of the loop.

Exterior: The asymmetrical gable roof is covered with sawn wood shingles. Foundations and walls are cut coursed stone and gable ends exposed timber with stone infills. All exterior woodwork is stained brown. A 5' x 10' uncovered porch is at the west end.

Openings: A single window is opposite double doors in the west wall.

Interior: The interior is undivided. It has a concrete floor.

Footbridge: There is a 90' x 4' wood footbridge across Chub Branch in the extreme southeast corner of the district. It rests on high banks and a single cut stone pier in mid-stream. (Structure #469)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JUL 28 1980

DATE ENTERED MAR 17 1981

BIF SPRINGS HISTORIC DISTRICT

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

7

PAGE

6

Structure 496 is a single-story, one room picnic shelter. It has a wood-shingled gabled roof. The foundations, floor, fireplace and chimney are stone. There are stained wood posts and beams. The structure is open on three sides and has a fireplace on one wall.

Openings: Three sides of the structure have no walls, and are completely open.

Interior: The interior is undivided with a stone floor.

Condition: All structures are in excellent condition, and receive regular maintenance and repair.

Three of the original structures: a concession stand, a restroom and bridge have been removed, but the National Park Service notified the Missouri Director of Natural Resources of its intention to preserve and maintain the remaining structures.

NOTES:

1. J. Harlen Bretz, "Caves of Missouri," Geological Survey and Water Resources, Vol. 39 (1956). p. 41; H. C. Brechman and N. S. Hinchey, "The Large Springs of Missouri," Geological Survey and Water Resources, Vol. 27, (1948), pp. 54-57.
2. John Kawamoto, Associate Director Midwest Region, National Park Service, to James L. Wilson, Director, Missouri Department of Natural Resources Files, Jefferson City, Missouri.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED SEP 24 1980

MAR 17 1981  
DATE ENTERED

BIG SPRING HISTORIC DISTRICT

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 7

Structure 427 is a single-story, two-room picnic shelter. It has a wood shingle hip roof. The foundation, walls, interior partition and double fireplace are stone masonry. There is a stone chimney. The exterior is finished with wood posts and beams, stained dark brown.

Openings: There are four door openings and 14 window openings.

Interior: The interior is divided into two rooms by a stone masonry partition. The floor is stone masonry.

Condition: Good.

## 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW		
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1925-27; 1933-37

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Big Spring Historic District is significant in that it includes a complex of twenty-six structures representing the best features of park construction by the Civilian Conservation Corps in Missouri. The district is the most successful setting, arrangement, and design of park structures in the state. The buildings remain in their original setting and receive constant upkeep and use. It is centered about Big Spring, unequalled in the turbulence of its discharge and matched by but one other spring in the country. It was the core of one of the oldest and most popular state parks.

### History

South-central Missouri is indeed a picturesque region. It is characterized by rolling tree-clad mountains and clear, swift streams. The major river, the Current, is almost entirely fed by springs. Its source is Montauk Springs in Dent County and as it flows along a southerly route through Shannon, Carter and Ripley counties, it is increased by water from springs such as Welch Cave, Round, Pullitite, Ebb and Flow, Blue and Big Spring.

Settlers began to move here from Tennessee and Kentucky during the first quarter of the 19th century and established farms in the small valleys. The migration increased in the middle of the century and most residents are direct descendants of these settlers.<sup>1</sup>

Due to the nature of the country, farms and towns were small and isolated and roads were tracks following river and stream beds. It has retained this primitive character even though in the latter quarter of the 19th century lumbering caused great changes. Rafts of logs were floated down the river to huge sawmills and logging roads and railroads snaked across the hills and valleys. Hundreds of persons found employment as mountains were systematically denuded of yellow pine and hardwoods. Forty years later, mill towns dwindled into small, isolated communities when the supply of lumber was exhausted. In 1920 this area was what it had been prior to the lumber boom, a region of small, isolated farms and villages.<sup>2</sup>

In the 1920's paved roads and efficient automobiles precipitated a major social revolution in the United States, and Americans traveled their country, creating a demand for public recreation facilities. Twenty-nine states had no state parks

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JUL 28 1980

DATE ENTERED MAR 17 1981

BIG SPRING HISTORIC DISTRICT

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

at all in 1921. Within five years all were actively developing them. In Missouri, revenue from hunting and fishing fees was set aside for the purchase of land and eight parks were acquired, one of them centered around Big Spring in Carter County, an attraction which had long awed visitors with the spectacular eruption of millions of gallons of water in a foaming, bubbling cascade. Land for the park -- 4,258 acres -- was purchased in 1924 and on July 17, 1926, a crowd of 8,000 persons heard Governor Sam A. Baker dedicate it. Keith McCanse, State Game and Fish Commissioner, whose department would administer the park, expressed a philosophy regarding state parks. They were maintained, he said, "for the purpose of furnishing recreation centers and to establish game refuges which will greatly increase the supply of game for the sportsmen of Missouri."<sup>3</sup>

Within a year a bath house and camp grounds had been provided, and wild turkeys were propagated "with very satisfactory results." Later, a scenic drive to the top of a 500 foot bluff, a bridle path and boating camp were added. Floods in 1927 inundated the camp grounds but did not keep the park from being the most popular in Missouri. However, a disastrous flood the following year did major damage.

Later construction included a house, concession stand, shelter house and, in 1932, a new auto and footbridge across the spring branch to Big Spring, which was illuminated at night.<sup>4</sup>

The great economic depression of the 1930's severely affected park development. However, in 1933, various federal agencies, including the Works Progress Administration (WPA), Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and National Park Service (NPS) gave direct assistance to the state parks of Missouri. Planning was provided by the NPS, and labor by the CCC, which established eight camps in various parks, including Big Spring. The first project there was much needed -- an extensive flood control dyke system.<sup>5</sup>

This was a major period for the development of American state parks and gave rise to rules for forms and function. The style is generally known, for a better name, "rustic." It uses natural materials in a proper scale to achieve sympathy with surroundings and the past. Structural elements are logs, timber, rocks and stone. Mountainous areas called for the use of "bold" statements; "softer" settings have "softer" designs. Each building and structure is conceived as part of the whole. Buildings were closely interrelated so as to achieve harmony and "workability."

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JUL 28 1980

DATE ENTERED MAR 17 1981

BIG SPRING HISTORIC DISTRICT

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

Unlike most buildings, these park structures are not required to be viewed from a distance. They merge with their environment, by landscaping, placement, and the use of natural colors -- browns, tans and gray. Rock and stone footings give the buildings "that agreeable look as having sprung from the soil." Horizontal, rather than vertical lines predominated. Whenever possible, local stone and wood were used.

Buildings were carefully grouped according to function: cabins, dining and meeting lodges, recreation facilities, and service buildings. Certain units such as shelters and restrooms were placed where they could receive maximum use.

Cabins ranged from primitive type structures without plumbing or cooking facilities to "second" and "first" class which included one or both. Most were designed to accommodate an average of four persons, a decision based on the size of the American family in the 1930's. Screened porches were widely used. Those at Big Spring were "first class" to justify their cost.

Cabins could not be placed in "splendid isolation." Wide separation meant longer roads, light and plumbing lines, and required taking of more land from the nature reserve. Nor could cabins be lined up row on row close together as automobile tourist courts. Each grouping was planned so that a measure of seclusion was obtained in proximities arranged to satisfy budgeting and planning demands.

Shelter houses, dining lodges, concession stands, restrooms and museums were tastefully designed, using similar rules: medium seclusion, natural materials, acceptable cost.<sup>6</sup>

Arrangement and design of buildings at Big Spring State Park are excellent examples of such planning. A system of all-weather roads used Missouri Highway 103 as its axis. This highway is routed west-east through Spring Valley to Big Spring, the focal point of park visitor interest. A quarter of a mile east of the entrance, a road circles a large cleared "playfield" and picnic area. Screened by landscaping to the west are park service buildings. East, overlooking the spring branch is the dining lodge. Cabin groupings are scattered in a forest along a winding road atop a bluff south of the playfield and on the east bank of the spring branch, adjacent to the Big Spring is a recreation area. All buildings are built of rough cut limestone and dark-brown stained timber.

Attendance at Big Spring State Park reached a quarter of a million persons a year. Park structures were carefully maintained and various interpretative programs provided, with naturalists and rangers. These included exhibits, hikes, lectures, and motion pictures.<sup>7</sup>

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JUL 28 1980

DATE ENTERED

MAR 17 1981

BIG SPRING HISTORIC DISTRICT

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 3

On January 1, 1970, the park was ceded to the United States by the State of Missouri as part of the Ozarks National Scenic Riverways and is now being maintained by the National Park Service. The concession stand and one restroom have been removed, together with a wood vehicle and pedestrian bridge across the spring branch. A wide bridge near the Big Spring recreational area, a replica of an Ozarks cabin and a cabin where "john boat" construction is demonstrated, have been constructed, east of the historic district.<sup>8</sup>

FOOTNOTES

1. Bicentennial Committee for a Written History, Eminence Heritage, 1976, (Eminence, Missouri, 1976).
2. Josiah Bridges, "Geology of the Eminence and Cardareva Quadrangles," Missouri Bureau of Geology and Mines, Vol. 24 (1930), p. 25; Gene Oakley,
3. Freeman Tilden, The State Parks, Their Meaning in America, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962), pp. 3-9; Annual Report of the State Game and Fish Commission, 1925, pp. 47-49; Missouri Game and Fish News, 1926, p. 1.
4. Annual Report of the State Game and Fish Commissioner, 1925, p. 53; Ibid, 1926, pp. 56-57; Ibid, 1927, p. 52; Ibid, 1928, p. 45; Ibid, 1930, p. 14; Ibid, 1972, pp. 55-56.
5. Ibid, 1936, pp. 44-45; Tilden, p. 15.
6. The discussion is based on Albert H. Good, Park and Recreation Structures, Part I, Administration and Basic Service Facilities, pp. 5-8; Part II, Recreational and Cultural Facilities, pp. 17-20; Part III, Overnight and Organized Camp Facilities (Washington: National Park Service, 1938).
7. Joseph Jaeger, Jr., Superintendent of State Parks, to Edwin B. Christensen, Jr., February 22, 1962; to Dan N. Spis, January 17, 1962; Missouri State Park Files, Jefferson City, Missouri; Annual Report, Missouri State Park Board, 1963, p. 22; Ibid, 1964, p. 80.
8. Jaeger to Carl Munson, November 13, 1969; Senate Bill Number 218, 75th (1969) Missouri General Assembly.

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1. Bechman, H.C. and N.S. Hinchey. "The Large Springs of Missouri," Geological Survey and Water Resources, Vol. 27 (1944), pp. 54-57.
2. Bicentennial Committee for a Written History. Eminence Heritage 1976, Eminence, Missouri: no publisher, 1976.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 315

UTM REFERENCES

A 15 67 92 80 40 90 13 70  
ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
C 15 67 92 80 40 90 13 70

B 15 67 92 80 40 90 13 70  
ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
D 15 67 92 80 40 90 13 70

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

**UTM NOT VERIFIED**  
**ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED**

See accompanying map.

The boundaries form an arbitrary rectangle to include the structures within the district. All of the structures and the land are federal property. The open acreage is wooded. No development is planned within the boundaries, but may occur outside the designated area.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Milton F. Perry

Revised by: Jill M. York  
Historian  
MWRO

June 30, 1980

ORGANIZATION

1005 A Quality Hill Towers

DATE

November 23, 1976

STREET & NUMBER

817 Jefferson Street

TELEPHONE

816/221-7951

CITY OR TOWN

Kansas City

STATE

Missouri 64105

## 12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES X

NO

NONE

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is National X State Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

Asst. Dir., Cultural Resources

DATE

7-22-80

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

3/17/81

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JUL 26 1980

DATE ENTERED MAR 17 1981

BIG SPRING HISTORIC DISTRICT

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 1

3. Bretz, J. Harlen. "Caves of Missouri," Geological Survey and Water Resources, Vol. 39 (1956), p. 41.
4. Bridges, Josiah. "Geology of the Eminence and Cardareva Quadrangles," Missouri Bureau of Geology and Mines, Vol. 24 (1930), p. 25.
5. Current Wave, Eminence, Missouri, June 7, 1928.
6. Goode, Albert H. Park and Recreation Structures, Part I, Administration and Basic Scenic Facilities. Washington: National Park Service, 1938, pp. 5-8.
7. \_\_\_\_\_, Part II, Recreational and Cultural Facilities. Washington: National Park Service, 1937, pp. 17-20.
8. \_\_\_\_\_, Part III, Overnight and Organized Camp Facilities. Washington: National Park Service, 1938, pp. 45-66; 161-163; 170-171.
9. Kawamoto, John. Correspondence as Associate Director, Midwest Region, National Park Service.
10. Jaeger, Joseph Jr. Correspondence as Director of Missouri State Parks.
11. Missouri. Annual Report of the State Game and Fish Commissioner, 1925. pp. 47-49, 53.
12. Missouri. Annual Report of the State Game and Fish Commissioner, 1926. pp. 57-67.
13. Missouri. Annual Report of the State Game and Fish Commissioner, 1927, p. 52.
14. Missouri. Annual Report of the State Game and Fish Commissioner, 1928. p. 45.
15. Missouri. Annual Report of the State Game and Fish Commissioner, 1930. p. 14.
16. Missouri. Annual Report of the State Game and Fish Commissioner, 1932. pp. 52-56.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JUL 28 1980

DATE ENTERED MAR 17 1981

BIG SPRING HISTORIC DISTRICT

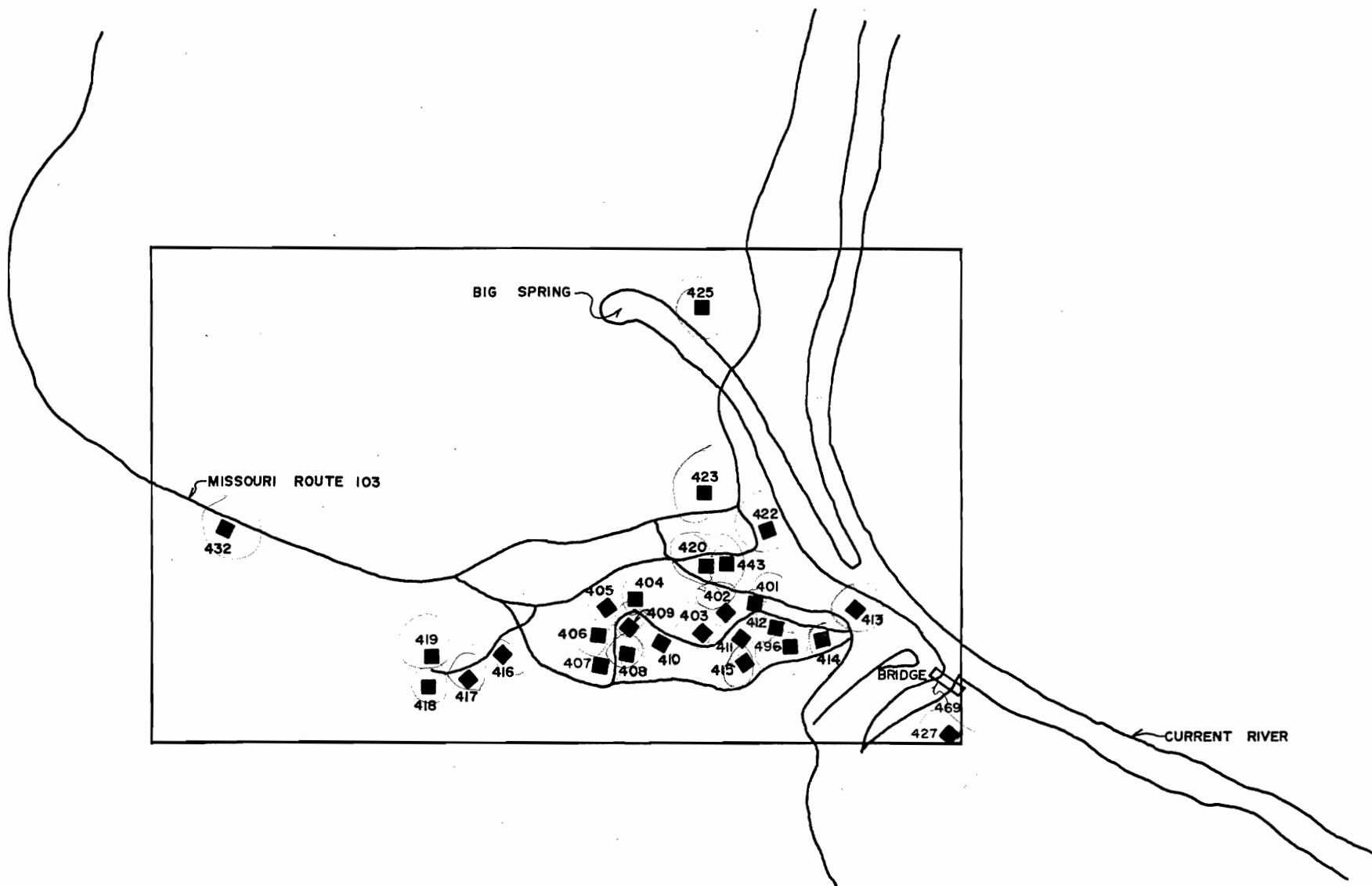
CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

17. Missouri. Annual Report of the State Game and Fish Commissioner, 1936.  
pp. 44-45.
18. Missouri. Annual Report, Missouri State Park Board, 1963, p. 22.
19. Missouri. Annual Report, Missouri State Park Board, 1964, p. 20.
20. Missouri Game and Fish News, August 1926, p. 1.
21. Missouri. Senate Bill No. 218, 75th (1969) Missouri General Assembly.
22. Oakley, Gene. The History of Carter County. Van Buren, Missouri, J. and  
G. Publications, 1970, pp. 93-127.
23. Tilden, Freeman. The State Parks. Their Meaning in America. New York:  
Alfred A. Knopf, 1962, pp. 264-265.



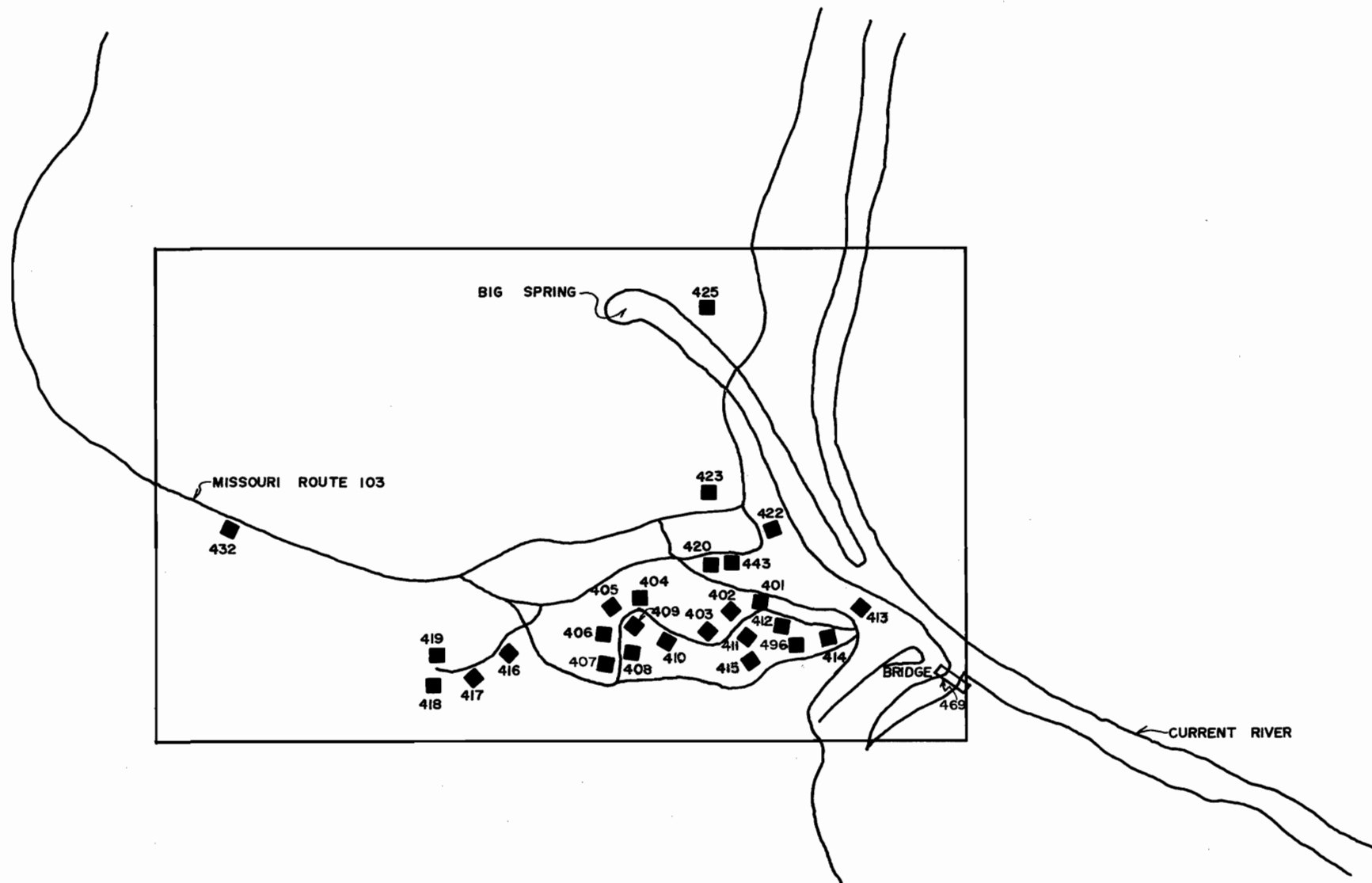
N  
NOT TO SCALE



SITE PLAN MAP BIG SPRING HISTORIC DISTRICT

SEP 24 1980

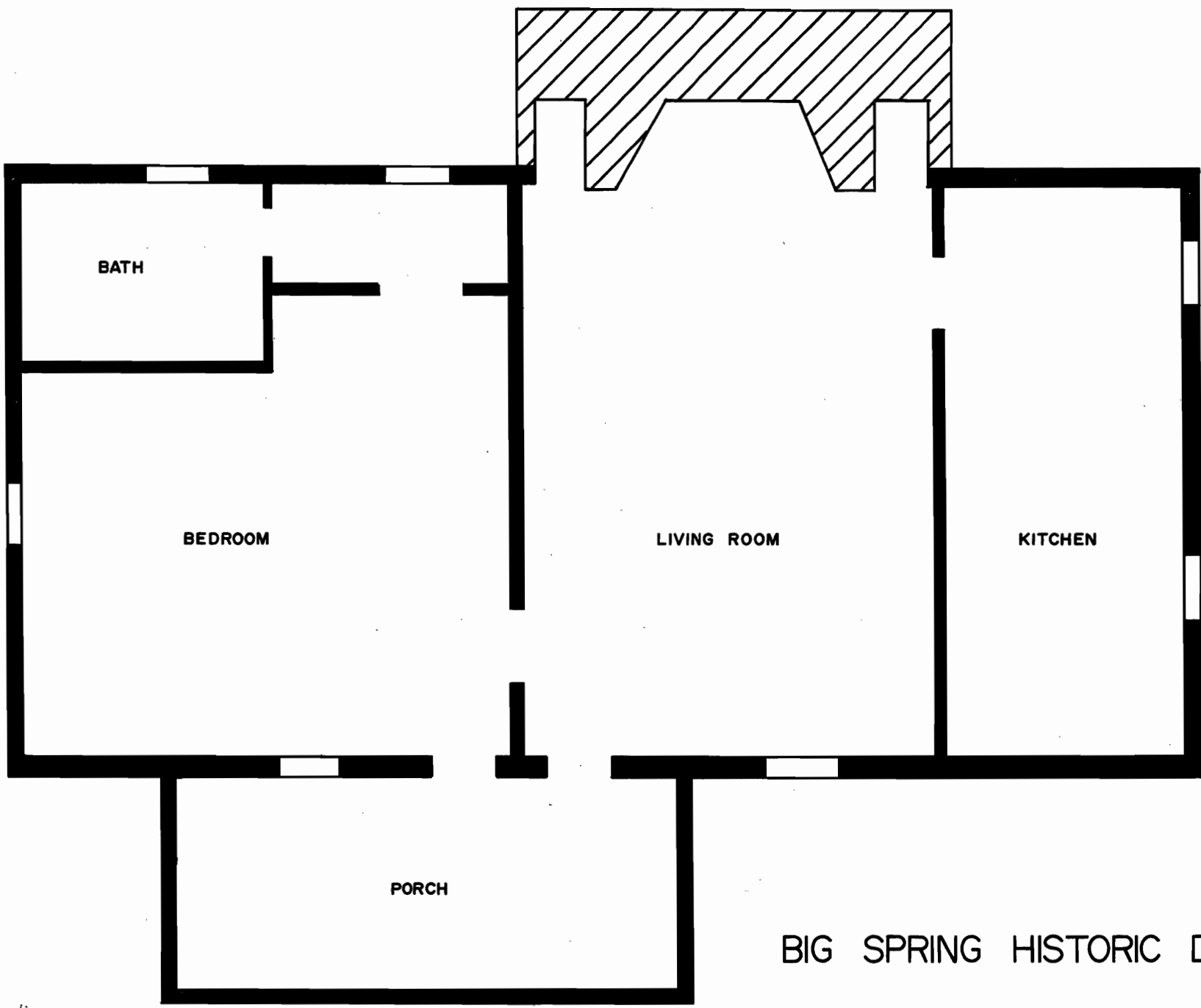
N  
NOT TO SCALE



SITE PLAN MAP BIG SPRING HISTORIC DISTRICT

JUL 26 1980

N  
1/4" = 1'-0"

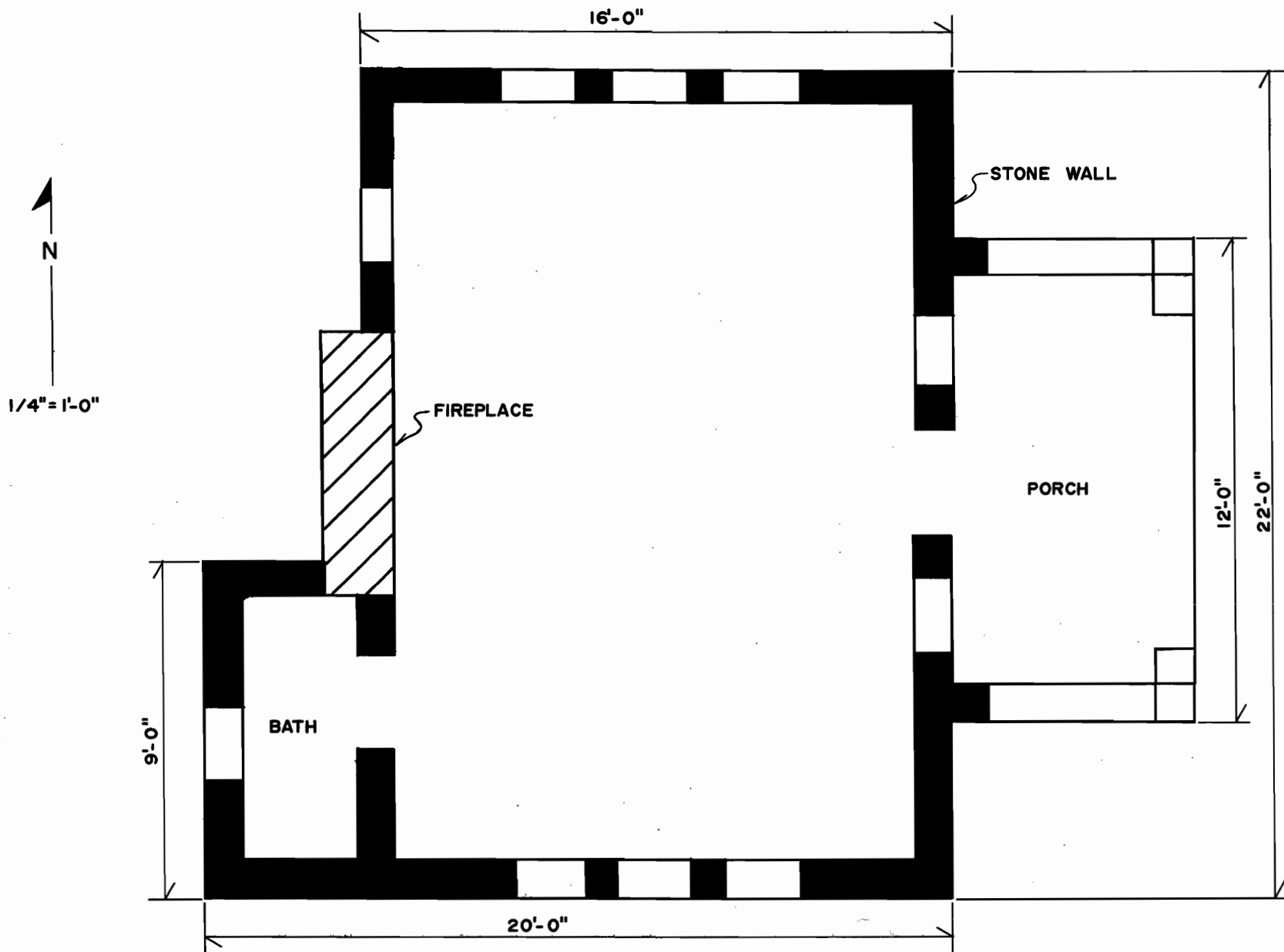


BIG SPRING HISTORIC DISTRICT

JUL 28 1980

BUILDINGS 404, 405, 409, 410, 411, 412

17 1980



BIG SPRING HISTORIC DISTRICT  
BUILDING 432, ENTRANCE STATION

JUL 28 1980

BIG SPRING  
RANGER STATION









