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.

1. Name of Property
   Historic name: Log Cabin Inn Tourist Camp
   Other names/site number: Belik’s Cabins
   Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
   (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location
   Street & number: 68306 U. S. 33
   City or town: Benton State: IN County: Elkhart
   Vicinity: x

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:
   ___ national ___ statewide x local
   Applicable National Register Criteria:
   X A ___ B x C ___ D

   Signature of certifying official/Title: Date
   Indiana DNR-Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology
   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

1
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

5. Classification
Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)
Private:   x
Public – Local
Public – State
Public – Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box.)
Building(s)   x
District
Site
Structure
Object
**Number of Resources within Property**
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

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Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**
(Enter categories from instructions.)

**DOMESTIC: Hotel**

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**Current Functions**
(Enter categories from instructions.)

**DOMESTIC: multiple dwelling**

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7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)
OTHER: Park Rustic

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)
foundation: CONCRETE
walls: WOOD: Log
WOOD: Weatherboard
roof: ASPHALT
other: STONE

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a summary paragraph that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph
The Log Cabin Inn is a tourist camp development constructed between c. 1926 and 1937 on U. S. 33, the old Lincoln Highway, southeast of the small village of Benton in Elkhart County. There are four rustic cabins connected by a semi-circular drive arranged on a bluff just above a channel of the Elkhart River (photo 0002). There is a stone fireplace, a contributing object, at the base of the bluff. Because of the planned arrangement of features on the site, the site is also considered contributing. One cabin is occupied while the others are vacant. Two of the cabins were built in 1926 while the other two were built later (1927-1937) as duplex tourist cabins.
Narrative Description

The Log Cabin Inn Tourist Camp site was developed in 1926 on the north side of the old Lincoln Highway. The site is considered contributing because of the arrangement of tourist cabins in an arc around the north side of a gravel drive. The main cabin (1926, photo 0006) is near the center of the development and semi-circular drive. A second, smaller sleeping cabin (1926, photo 0007) is east of the main cabin and faces west. They are connected by a concrete sidewalk and are built into a bluff that runs along the site above a lower level lawn. A wide set of concrete steps is between the two cabins and leads from the sidewalk to the lower level lawn (see photo 0009). The steps once led to an outhouse also built of logs (no longer extant). A new sidewalk connects the bottom of the steps to a new porch on the north end of the easternmost cabin. Two tourist cabins, each with two sleeping units (identified as duplex units in this document) are to the west of the central cabin on top of the bluff (photo 0004). These were constructed from 1927 through 1937 and feature vertical half-log siding versus more traditional log construction like the earlier cabins. The duplex cabins front the gravel drive.

The lawn between the gravel drive and highway once had two gasoline pumps, though nothing remains of that feature of the development. Lawn extends between and around the cabins along the top of the bluff. A stone fireplace for outdoor cooking is in the west end of the lower level lawn area (photo 0001). The area curving from the east side of the site around to the west is wooded and has a remnant channel of the Elkhart River, whose primary course is further north of the site. It appears that at least a portion of this wooded area with minor waterway was maintained for use by guests and the owner for a garden and place to dry tourists’ bedding on a clothesline. The tourist camp faces U.S. 33/old Lincoln Highway, which runs slightly northwest/southeast, therefore the facades are given as south/front façade, etc.

Main Cabin, 1926. Contributing. Photos 0003, 0006, 0009, 0013-0015
The cabin has a concrete foundation and the walls are narrow, round logs that are saddle-notched at the corners and extend out about 12” from the corners. The logs are fitted together with concrete chinking between. The cabin has 6/6 wood windows and a full-width enclosed front porch/living room. The cabin has brackets made of logs that support wide-overhanging eaves on its side gables which are covered with clapboards. The low-pitched gabled roof is covered with rolled asphalt paper and has exposed rafter tails on the front and back facades. A concrete sidewalk extends around the front, east side, and back of the building.

The front façade (left side of photo 0006) features a full-width enclosed porch/living room with a row of five 6/6 wood windows and a three-panel wood door with a window in its top half on the façade’s east end. The porch has a low-pitched shed roof that ties directly into the base of the gable roof. Pairs of 6/6 wood windows are in the east and west walls of the enclosed porch, at the south end of the east and west facades (right side of photo 0003 and middle of photo 0006). A three-panel wood door with a window in its top half is north of the pair of windows in the east and west facades, leading directly onto the enclosed porch. The doors have small gabled porch roofs above them that are supported by log brackets. Centered with the gable in the west façade.
Log Cabin Inn Tourist Camp, Elkhart County, IN

(photo 0003), north of the enclosed porch, is a three-panel wood door with a window in its top half and a small gabled porch roof supported by log brackets. Flanking the door are 6/6 wood windows. A small wood window divided into four panes of glass is centered in the gable. Centered with the gable in the east façade (right side of photo 0006), north of the enclosed porch, is a chimney composed of small rubble stone that extends through the wide-overhanging eave. A pair of 6/6 wood windows is north of the chimney.

The back (north) façade (right side of photo 0009) features a walk-out basement and concrete retaining walls. The east retaining wall is faced with small glacial boulder stone and features a concrete cap and concrete steps that lead from a full-width porch to the lower level. The basement wall is covered with wood planks, some of which composed storage doors for the basement. The back porch has a wood floor and simple wood railing with wood posts. The back façade features a three-panel wood door with a window opening in its top half that has been covered with plywood. The door is off-centered to the east on the façade. Flanking the door are 6/6 wood windows.

The interior of the cabin is arranged with a large enclosed front porch (this is original to the construction of the cabin and was used as a small shop, photo 0014) that has two openings into a large room in the east half of the cabin (dining room, photo 0013). Two small rooms in the west half of the cabin open off the dining room. The small rooms were a bathroom and kitchen. The cabin’s interior condition is somewhat deteriorated, but it has carpets on the floors and the walls are covered with Masonite board. The ceilings are covered with fiberboard. The cabin has simple wood trim baseboards and wood jambs and entablature door hoods. A chair rail is on the walls of the dining room. No historic interior doors are extant. The bathroom retains its historic porcelain sink, tub and toilet (photo 0015). Wood cabinets are built into a bulkhead on the north wall of the bathroom.

Family Sleeping Cabin, 1926. Contributing. Photos 0007-0008, 0010-0012
The cabin has a concrete foundation and the walls are narrow, round logs that are saddle-notched at the corners and extend out about 12” from the corners. The logs are fitted together with concrete chinking between. The cabin has 6/6 and 1/1 wood windows. The cabin’s side gables (facing north and south) are covered with clapboards. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles and has exposed rafter tails on the front and back (west and east) facades. A concrete sidewalk leads to a wood deck on the front of the building. A brick chimney is centered on the roof ridge.

The front (west) façade (left side of photo 0007) features a three-panel wood door with a window in its top half centered on the wall. Flanking the door are a 6/6 wood window in the north end and a 1/1 wood window in the south end. The south façade (right side of photo 0007) has two small wood windows in the exposed basement wall. The first floor features a three-sided bay, also composed of logs, with a pent roof and exposed rafter tails. The bay has a pair of 1/1 wood windows. A small wood window is centered in the gable wall. The east façade has a fully-exposed concrete basement wall where impressions of wood plank formwork is evident. There is a small wood window in each end of the basement wall. The east façade’s first floor has a
Log Cabin Inn Tourist Camp  Elkhart County, IN
Name of Property County and State

small window divided into four panes of glass centered in the wall and a 1/1 wood window in the south end and a 6/6 wood window in the north end.

The north façade (photo 0008) has a full-width porch with a concrete floor and shed roof covered with metal at the walk-out basement level. The porch roof is supported by logs. This lower level porch was added in 2015. The basement level features a new entry door with a full window in its west end and a small square wood window in its east end. The first floor features two 6/6 wood windows. A small wood window divided into four panes of glass is centered in the gable wall.

The interior of the main level is arranged with a living space with kitchen in the south end of the first floor (photo 0011) and a bedroom in the north end (photo 0010). A small foyer is off the entry and opens into the living area and bedroom (photo 0012). A staircase to the basement is in the east wall of the foyer and a closet opens off the southeast corner of the bedroom. A broad segmented arched bulkhead is between the foyer and living area and over the top of the three-sided bay which functions as a small dining nook. The first floor features wood floors and plaster walls and ceilings. The wood trim consists of tall baseboards and door jambs with entablature hoods. The first floor has five-panel wood doors and modern kitchen cabinetry and bathroom fixtures. The basement is arranged with a living room in its north end and a bedroom and bathroom in its southeast and southwest corners, respectively. The walls dividing the bedroom, bathroom, and living area are concrete block. The exterior walls and floor are concrete. The ceilings in the bathroom and bedroom are drywall. The ceiling in the living area is open to the floor joists and wood floor deck of the first floor above. The wood staircase from the first floor is between the four-panel wood doors of the bedroom and bathroom. The staircase has a balustrade of simple wood square balusters and a square newel post with a shaped cap.

Duplex Tourist Cabin #1, c. 1927-1937. Contributing. Photos 0004 (left side), 0016
The cabin has a concrete block foundation and its walls are covered with narrow half-round logs attached vertically to the walls. The side-gabled roof has exposed rafter tails and is covered with asphalt shingles. Metal skirting is around the base of the cabin. The front façade features two five-panel wood doors centered on the wall. The east door is covered with plywood and a historic wood trellis with a diamond pattern in its center is between the doors. Pairs of metal casement windows, each divided into two panes of glass, flank the doors. The sides are identical and feature a pair of metal casement windows divided into two panes of glass. The gable wall, also covered with logs, is jettied and features a rectangular wood louver. The back façade features two small pairs of metal casement windows centered in the wall. These open into the bathrooms inside the cabin.

The entry doors open into a small foyer space in each sleeping unit of the cabin. The sleeping rooms are in the ends of the cabin and a small toilet room is off the foyer. The floors are covered with vinyl tiles that appear like a parquet floor. The walls are covered with v-grooved knotty pine planks and the ceilings are covered with stained pine plywood. The bathrooms retain their historic porcelain sinks, tubs and toilets. The bathroom walls and ceiling are covered with painted pressed board with wood cabinets at the top of the party wall. Historic porcelain lights are in the ceilings.
Duplex Tourist Cabin #2, c. 1927-1937. Contributing. Photos 0005, 0017-0018
The cabin is nearly identical to Duplex Cabin #1 with a concrete block foundation and its walls are covered with narrow half-round logs attached vertically to the walls. The side-gabled roof has exposed rafter tails and is covered with asphalt shingles. Metal skirt is around the base of the cabin. The front façade features two wood doors centered on the wall. The east door is a non-historic wood door and the west door is a three-panel wood door with a window opening (covered with plywood) in its top. A historic wood trellis with a diamond pattern in its center is between the doors. Pairs of metal casement windows, each divided into two panes of glass, flank the doors. The gable sides are identical and feature a pair of metal casement windows divided into two panes of glass; the west windows are covered with plywood. The gable wall, also covered with logs, is jettied and features a rectangular wood louver. The back façade features two small pairs of metal casement windows centered in the wall. These open into the bathrooms inside the cabin.

The entry doors open into a small foyer space in each sleeping unit of the cabin. The sleeping rooms are in the ends of the cabin and a small toilet room is off the foyer. The floors are covered with vinyl tiles that appear like a parquet floor. The walls are covered with v-grooved knotty pine planks and the ceilings are covered with stained pine plywood. The bathrooms retain their historic porcelain sinks, tubs and toilets. The bathroom walls and ceiling are covered with painted pressed board with wood cabinets at the top of the party wall. Historic porcelain lights are in the ceilings.

Stone Fireplace, c. 1926. Contributing (object). Photo 0001
The small outdoor fireplace has a simple hearth/shelf for grilling and a short smoke stack. It is composed of rubble stone and is in fair condition.
8. Statement of Significance

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

- [x] 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.
- [x] 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
(Mark “x” in all the boxes that apply.)

- [ ] 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
Log Cabin Inn Tourist Camp

Elkhart County, IN

Name of Property

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

TRANSPORTATION

Period of Significance

1926-1972

Significant Dates

Significant Person (last name, first name)
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder (last name, first name)

Bunger, William “Bill”
Scott, Edward
Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance begins in 1926, the estimated construction date of the tourist camp cabins. While the important interstate route on which the camp was constructed, the Lincoln Highway, was redesignated from this road (U.S. 33) to a more southerly alignment across Indiana in 1928, the route continued to be well-traversed by motorists. The end date for the period of significance is 1972, the year the tourist camp discontinued serving motorists in its full capacity for lodging, gasoline, and dining. The cabins sat vacant for a few years before being used as a residence by the third owner, who also sold gasoline.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

Not applicable

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Log Cabin Inn Tourist Camp is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under criterion A for its association with early motorized transportation history. The camp offered individual cabin lodging as well as other amenities for motorists using the Lincoln Highway. The camp is also eligible under criterion C for its examples of roadside rustic architecture that became popular in the United States during the first decades of the 20th century. Rustic roadside attractions were akin to the park rustic style developed by the National Park Service. The style came to symbolize America’s wilderness, particularly in its national and state parks, and would have been attractive to motorists traveling to these places. All of the buildings retain significant architectural features, most notably their historic log or wood siding, roof lines, windows, and stonework.

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

TRANSPORTATION

The Log Cabin Inn Tourist Camp is significant because of its development related to the early days of motor travel, particularly for services provided to tourist travel promoted through the Good Roads Movement. That movement, which sought to promote the maintenance and development of drivable roads across the country, was started in large part by the Lincoln Highway Association through their efforts in naming, marking, and marketing the Lincoln
Highway from coast-to-coast. The Benton tourist cabins were constructed on the Lincoln Highway for the express purpose of serving the traveler with lodging, dining, and fuel services. The small complex served the public from 1926 through 1972 under two proprietors who also maintained their residence at the camp. While a few other tourist camps like the Benton camp were constructed across the Lincoln Highway in Indiana, only the Benton camp exists with its individual cabins and main house where tourists dined.

The Lincoln Highway was the nation’s first established coast-to-coast highway providing travelers a route from New York to California through Northern Indiana. The road, established in 1913, began in New York’s Times Square and terminated at the Palace of the Legion of Honor in San Francisco. The highway played an important role in the development of the automobile’s influence on the way of life in 20th Century America representing a shift from railroad dominated travel to automobile use. The Lincoln Highway Association, formed by Hoosier native Carl Fisher, led the fight for good roads in the United States. From its beginning, it sought to shape public sentiment to understand the need of good roads through education and development of seedling miles of good highway. Henry Joy, one of the LHA’s founders, commented that the organization had in mind was not to build a road, but to produce the building of many roads by educating the people. Beyond question, Joy believed he and his colleagues did bring about what is known as the Good Roads Movement in America.

Establishing the route of the Lincoln Highway was mixed with factors such as population centers, grade and land formations, and by influence of politicians. The original route touched these important population centers and by an account in the Lincoln Highway guide of 1916, the highway connected 60% of the nation’s population and 67% of registered vehicles. These factors played a role in Indiana where it was formally announced that the highway would pass through Fort Wayne, Ligonier, Benton, Goshen, Elkhart, South Bend, LaPorte, and Valparaiso. The 1916 Lincoln Highway guide stated that the route followed the paths of nations as it progressed westward and the highway’s course held closely to the old trails of the east and in the west by early settlers.

Indiana’s Lincoln Highway offers a unique perspective on the history of the highway both nationally and within the state due to the original and later routes. With the establishment of the Lincoln Highway Association in 1913, proponents seeking to have the highway designated through their communities made arguments in their favor based on population bases and already established good roads. This was the case in 1913 as the Lincoln Highway followed an already established roads between Fort Wayne and South Bend, then from South Bend to Valparaiso. This northern route was not a direct route across the state but offered the inclusion of large population bases in Goshen, Mishawaka, South Bend, and LaPorte, utilizing existing established routes. An old Native American and pioneer trail known as the Sauk Trail provided the path between Dyer and New Carlisle and an early trade and stagecoach route between Fort Wayne and Goshen was used for the east half of the Lincoln Highway in Indiana; this was also part of the Ft. Wayne-Ft. Dearborn Trail of the late 1700s.

1 US Dept. of the Interior, Lincoln Highway Special Resource Study
Control stations and control signs were erected by 1918 to help motorists understand the distance of travel between cities and towns. Motorists could reset their odometer to the sign and gage it by the information provided in the highway guides produced by the LHA. The stations or signs were located at important intersections or landmarks. Frequently, control stations were located at community post offices if they were located on the route. In Elkhart County, Indiana, the control station was located at the county courthouse in Goshen. Control signs served much the same purpose and were painted in red, white, and blue in smaller communities or in front of hotels and garages featured in the highway guides.

The Lincoln Highway Association printed official travel guides to also help motorist navigate across country. The 1916 guide indicated that Indiana was rapidly hard-surfacing the Lincoln Highway with concrete as specified by the LHA. The Indiana State Highway Commission was not in operation until 1919, so a patchwork of local efforts had to make do. Five of eight counties the road passes through had spent $871,000 in road improvements with 70 miles hard-surfaced, some being brick, and others covered with native gravel and macadam. The most improved section was between Fort Wayne and South Bend. Each town along the route gained entry into the guidebook and it included its altitude, population, road condition, and the types of services available. Always listed first were the number of hotels and garages, generic for service and gasoline. In 1916, Benton was shown to have one hotel and one garage. By the printing of the 1918 guide, Benton had retained its hotel and garage but also had a control station established at the post office. And maybe more importantly, the highway had been paved with brick.

Beginning in 1926, the year the tourist camp was established in Benton, travelers began to request a more direct (southern) route across Indiana. This later section would become designated U.S. Highway 30, as much of the remaining highway became known across the country. Between Fort Wayne and Valparaiso, the highway was created by mostly new construction paralleling much of the Pennsylvania Railroad. The later route is typically called the “1928” route due to final completion, and marking of it by the Boy Scouts in that year. The Lincoln Highway retained its identity despite being designated as U.S. 30 in 1926 for thirty more years until the Federal Aid to Highway Act was passed, bringing about the interstate system.

Benton’s small complex of tourist cabins and proprietors’ home and services building was built between 1926 and 1937 by Edward and Mabel (Sarjent) Scott on what was originally a ten acre tract of land between the north side of Lincoln Highway/U.S. 33 and the Elkhart River just southeast of Benton, Indiana. The Scott family were farmers who owned fifty acres of land on the southeast side of the small village of Benton. Edward Scott (1883-1943) was a lifetime resident of the community. He farmed and then became a patrolman by 1930 during the time he owned the tourist camp. He married Mabel Sarjent (1884-1957) in 1903 in Elkhart County. The couple originally lived in the village of Benton and had four children who helped them operate the tourist camp as they grew older. They were Wilber, Helen, Lois, and Alice. Mabel Scott did bookkeeping for the business, as well as washing laundry and bedding for the tourist rooms, and operating the kitchen for tourists and customers. Alice, one of the daughters who also pumped gasoline for tourists, remarked that due to their location on the national highway it meant that they had a good tourist trade from all over the United States from the opening of the camp.
In about 1926, Edward Scott and a local house carpenter, William “Bill” Bunger, a neighbor of the Scotts, constructed the main cabin (photo 0006) and a smaller sleeping cabin (photo 0007) for the family east of the main house. Scott felled gray ash trees in the bottomlands of the Elkhart River and former channel area of the river north of the property. Scott’s father maintained a sawmill on the forty acres on the north side of the river. Scott’s daughter recalled that her father liked the appearance of the gray bark so he decided to leave the bark rather than strip it from the logs. They then placed mortar between the logs. It had been Scott’s dream to build a log home; it is unclear what influenced him in that architectural style. An outhouse with two doors and a central partition followed, also made of logs. It was used by both the family and tourists and was located between the cabins at the base of the hill (bottom of steps, see in photo 0009). The main cabin consisted of a basement, kitchen, living room, and dining room. The family used the main cabin as their own, but it was also used for tourist dining. The smaller cabin to the east of the main house was used for the family’s sleeping quarters with two sleeping rooms on the main level, and a basement.

Three frame tourist cabins with vertical half-log siding were built between 1927 (the first one) and 1937 (the last one) behind the main house. Only two of these are extant (photos 0002, 0004). The double cabins (without central partition) featured two double beds while the single cabins featured a single double bed. Lodging was charged at between $1.00 and $2.00 a night. The cabins were also used by seasonal fishermen who travelled to the area. Weekday noon lunches and Sunday dinners were served from the kitchen in the main cabin. Lunches consisted of hamburger or barbeque sandwiches, soup, and pie. Sunday dinners consisted of fried chicken, mashed potatoes, gravy, vegetables, and homemade pies that included butterscotch, chocolate, and cherry. There were six square tables arranged in the dining room for customers who consisted of tourists and local prominent people from Ligonier and Goshen who traveled the Lincoln Highway for Sunday meals. A clothesline and truck-patch for growing vegetables were located north of the camp near the former channel of the river. The Scotts also provided Sinclair gasoline sales with fuel pumps between the cabins by the drive, and cold bottles of pop from the Ligonier Bottling Co. were offered from the main cabin for five cents. Two early photographs of the camp are known to exist. One shows the main cabin from the southeast side with two gasoline pumps with a large sign in front with “Log Cabin Inn” and “Lunch and Refreshments” on the sign. Adirondack-like chairs and small tables are located in the lawn between the main cabin and smaller cabin to its east. This photo appears to date to about 1926. The second photo likely dates to about the 1930s and shows the main cabin and smaller cabin to its east from the Lincoln Highway, which is in the foreground and is paved with brick. The gasoline pumps appear the same, but include a pole with a sign that is lit from two shell-style lamp shades. The landscaping is also more mature in the photo and it includes a picket fence between the cabins.

For unknown reasons, Edward Scott took his own life in 1943. His death certificate recorded his occupation as restaurateur of the Log Cabin Lunch Room. Scott’s death in 1943 led Mabel to sell the property to Robert and Genevieve (Winks) Belik in about 1947. Mabel Scott remarried Benton resident Joseph Rippey in about 1950; she died in 1957 and is buried with her husband in Jackson Cemetery, Elkhart County. The Beliks continued the tourist camp and operated it under the same name the Scotts used, Log Cabin Inn.
The Beliks were originally from Chicago. Robert Belik (1888-1965) had been born in Austria and immigrated to the United States with his parents in 1893. He married Genevieve Winks (1891-1972) in 1912. Belik was a manager in the Marshall Field’s department store in Chicago, probably in the clothing department. The Beliks lived in Minnesota prior to arriving in South Bend by the 1930s. In South Bend, Belik managed Benton’s Clothing Store on South Michigan Street through the middle part of the 1940s before buying the tourist camp and moving to Benton. The Beliks had no children of their own, but were well-loved by the people of Benton who gave them a 50th wedding anniversary in 1962. It seems for a short period of time, or off and on, the tourist camp was referred to as “Belik’s Cabins” and appears with that name in the 1963 and 1969 Elkhart County Rural Directories, but was more often referred to as the Log Cabin Tourist Camp or Log Cabin Motel in other directories. Robert died in 1965, after which time Genevieve continued to operate the camp. When she could no longer pump gasoline for motorists, the customers helped themselves and paid inside the main cabin. Genevieve died at the camp in 1972; her death certificate indicated that she was a housewife and operated a tourist court. She was buried with her husband at Solomon Creek Cemetery in Elkhart County.

After Genevieve’s death, the camp discontinued serving the public and sat empty for a few years prior to its purchase by John and Fannie Allison in 1975. John Allison was a used car dealer who purchased the property and continued to sell gasoline under the name Boyville Gas & Oil; he also maintained his residence there. By the 1990s, Allison, a licensed preacher who often used his business as a pulpit, had turned the property into a junk/antique dealership. He lived at the property until about 2009. The Log Cabin Inn Tourist Camp has suffered very little loss of historic context, though the historic fuel pumps and landscaped lot that provided a more uniform feel to the property have been lost. The small cabin outhouse (1926) at the base of the hill is gone, as is one of the three tourist cabins constructed between 1927 and 1937. The other two tourist cabins and the main cabin and the smaller log cabin used by the family for sleeping quarters are extant. A small outdoor stone fireplace (photo 0001) and the concrete steps that once led to the outhouse are also extant. The cabins have their original log construction and windows and have suffered from little alteration over the years of use. Though the cabins had fallen into disrepair and the condition of the main house is poor, they retain their feel and interior space configuration. The current owner has renovated the smaller log cabin and is planning restoration of the other structures.

The transportation-related architecture of the Lincoln Highway in Indiana has been surveyed at least three times during 2004 through 2015. Those surveys, including the first conducted by the National Park Service in 2004, reveal no tourist cabin/tourist courts remaining except for the Benton tourist cabins which had been overlooked by the National Park survey. Most of the highway’s extant historic lodging-related architecture consists of long, linear buildings with front-entry sleeping rooms connected to each other and the main house/office. While other states may have tourist camps with individual cabins remaining on their sections of the Lincoln Highway, Indiana does not. However, there are a few camps that exist in Northern Indiana on other important early motorized transportation routes. This area of the state was a vital transportation corridor leading from large cities on the East Coast and the Great Lakes area through to Chicago and the West Coast. These heavily-traveled east/west routes also took
tourists to the ever-increasing inventory of national parks and monuments in the western United States. Highway 6 (also known as the Grand Army of the Republic Highway) is also a coast-to-coast highway across Northern Indiana and it has three such tourist camps. These are located in Porter, LaPorte, and DeKalb Counties. The example in Porter County (Nobles Tourist Court) is well preserved and dates to c. 1930 with several clapboard-sided frame cabins with jerkin-head roofs. Porter County also has a small tourist camp (c. 1920) with gable-fronted cabins on U.S. 20, another important east/west highway in the state, near the Lake Michigan dunes. The tourist camp in LaPorte County on U.S. 6 was known as the Blue Diamond Truck Stop and Tourist Cottages and date to c. 1940. The tourist camp has been marginalized by further development as a mobile home park and only three frame and clapboard cabins remain. The small tourist camp on U.S. 6 in DeKalb County also has had a mobile home park develop around it, but it retains three small gable-front cabins covered with clapboards. The Benton tourist cabins are somewhat unique for their design and log construction, certainly among these other clapboard-sided examples, in Northern Indiana.

Automobile tourist courts were popular along the Lincoln Highway and other heavily-traveled tourist roads usually on the periphery of towns and cities where more rural settings allowed for spacious developments. Tourist, or motor courts typically featured free-standing single-occupancy cabins or cottages sometimes only large enough for a bed and small bathroom. Independent cabins offered the feeling of a personal dwelling and provided ample room to park the automobile immediately outside the front door. The cabins were usually positioned in a park-like setting around or flanking a primary building used by the proprietor as an office and sometimes residence. Cabins were designed in a variety of styles from rustic cabins like the Benton Cabins, or vernacular shacks to colonial cottages and bungalows. These fell out of popularity by the 1950s as a new form of lodging developed, the motel. Cabins were often demolished or moved away, sometimes leaving only the primary residence, resulting in few of these resources in existence today.

ARCHITECTURE

The buildings of the Log Cabin Inn Tourist Camp are constructed with either whole-logs or half-log vertical siding. The rustic architectural style of the cabins lend a unique and more pioneer-like feel to the property as opposed to other tourist camps and lodging opportunities travelers of the Lincoln Highway would have encountered in Indiana. It is unclear why Edward Scott, the proprietor, selected the rustic style or what may have influenced him in choosing the design for the cabins. In an interview, his daughter said that it had been her father’s dream to build his home of logs. The materials were locally plentiful. Gray ash trees growing in the bottomlands of the Scott farm, along the river, provided free and easily obtainable building materials. Scott appreciated the unstripped beauty of the logs with their silvery-gray bark, so the logs were left natural and mortar chinking was added between. Whether it was for ease of construction, or other factors, Scott constructed the smaller tourist cabins with half logs (rounded side outward) vertically installed over a wood frame. Scott also introduced some stone masonry in the camp that includes a chimney on the main cabin, a retaining wall that connects to the back of the main

Section 8 page 16
Log Cabin Inn Tourist Camp Elkhart County, IN

Log Cabin Inn Tourist Camp
Elkhart County, IN

The Log Cabin Inn Tourist Camp is located in Elkhart County, IN. The cabin (both seen in photo 0009), and a small stone fireplace/cook stove used by tourists in the lower level of the site behind the cabins (photo 0001). These are composed of smaller uncut stone laid in random coursing. All of the cabins have their original divided-lite wood windows and many of the wood doors are original (photos 0003, 0006-0007).

Scott, and his house carpenter-neighbor, Bill Bunger, constructed the log buildings with an eye for the rustic style. The main cabin features whole log construction with mortar chinking. The ends of the logs are allowed to extend beyond the notched joinery to form L-shaped corners (photo 0006). A high level of craftsmanship is exhibited in the eave brackets of the main cabin. The brackets are made from half logs (or large branches) and are spanned by an angled log brace fitted into place by round log pegs (see photo 0003). These log brackets also support the three small gabled porch roofs on the gable sides of the cabin. Only the fascia, window and door trim, and clapboards in the gable wall are standardized milled lumber on the exterior. The main cabin is asymmetrical and has an informal quality to it, including the gables’ off-centered ridge and long-sloped enclosed front porch. A chimney composed of rounded fieldstone is located on the east gabled wall and adds to the rustic quality of the entire building. The smaller family sleeping cabin is of the same whole log construction but lacks log brackets. It has a slightly more formal feel and includes a three-sided bay on its front gabled wall (photo 0007). The bay features the same log construction with ends that extend beyond the notches. This is a particularly prominent feature on the small cabin due to the narrowness of the projecting bay, which also features exposed rafter tails for its roof. Both of these cabins also feature wood-plank formed concrete basement/foundation walls which underscores the homebuilt construction of the complex. The interior of the buildings, though still very much original in condition, do not portray a rustic quality. Rather, they are more typical of 1920s construction with wood floors and plaster walls and ceilings (photos 0010-0015). The wood floors, which are also ash, were milled and laid by Edward Scott.

The other two cabins, which are the smaller tourist cabins, feature half-log siding installed vertically on the frame buildings (photos 0004-0005). These two cabins feature jettied gable walls also covered with half logs, and exposed rafter tails. The trim around the windows and doors is also composed of half-logs. This half-log construction was not chinked with mortar, but has a natural and unpainted appearance. Another nice handmade feature of the cabins are the wood attic louvers/vents that are centered in the gable walls (seen on the left side of photo 0004). The interior of these cabins differ, however, from the other two cabins with a more rustic selection of finishes. The interiors are lined with knotty pine boards and the ceilings are covered with pine plywood (photos 0016-0018).

As the number of National Parks grew in the early 1900s, and visitors to the parks began to grow due to better access with the Good Roads Movement, those responsible for the protection of the parks had a difficult balance to strike. How do the parks provide structures to service visitors without the structures overpowering the experience? The adaptation of local materials into structures became the answer. This “park rustic” architectural style grew in popularity in the United States from the early part of the 20th century into the 1940s. It saw its most prolific use during the Federal Relief projects of the 1930s. The style, which focused use of locally-derived natural materials, became a common architectural style of many of Indiana’s state parks and our
national parks. In Albert Good’s 1935 book on park design, Good described the effort to introduce architecture into the park system as “the subordination of the structure to the environment”. ² He references the appropriate use of materials, including the rustic style, to their surroundings. Good states that if used successfully, the style, through the use of native materials in proper scale, avoidance of straight lines and over-sophistication, gives the feeling of having been executed by pioneer craftsmen with limited hand tools. The rustic style “thus achieves sympathy with natural surroundings and with the past.”³

The style was part nostalgia and part frugality as builders scavenged farm fields and forests for boulders and trees to incorporate in building design. By the 1930s, when workers with the Works Progress Administration and Civilian Conservation Corps were building small and large structures for state and national park systems, the buildings evoked the spirit of pioneer life and the great Westward Expansion. This experience may have been somewhat nostalgic for those times as the “wilderness” of the United States had been tamed by the early 1900s. The style often included whole-log construction, though typically stripped of bark, for lodges, cabins, and other tourist-related structures. Stonework composed of rubble or fieldstone, river rock, and ashlars that could have been easily gathered and mortared into place were used for foundations, porches, chimneys, or whole wall construction.

While Indiana does not have examples of park rustic architecture located in National Parks, the state does have a fine collection of rustic architecture found in its many state parks. These were developed between 1916 and the early 1940s, and are stylistically the same as National Park examples and were often built by men working in the Federal Relief programs of the 1930s. The state parks have buildings composed of combinations of whole-log, rough sawn, and locally-quarried stone materials. Pokagon, Spring Mill, Brown County, McCormick’s Creek, and Turkey Run State Parks all feature examples of park rustic architecture. Finding privately-built examples of the park rustic style is more difficult. Certainly, throughout the U.S., interest in log building was reviving. Gustav Stickley, for example, used log construction for his Craftsman Farms project in 1908-1911. In northern Indiana, the most notable examples are those built by noted Hoosier author, Gene Stratton Porter. Porter built two large examples of rustic cabins in Geneva (1894, Limberlost) and Rome City (1912, Wildflower Woods). Both cabins have whole-log construction with ends that extend beyond the notching, just like the cabins of the Log Cabin Inn Tourist Camp. It is possible Scott may have seen the example at Rome City due to its proximity to Benton. A few park rustic examples are also located in the dunes region of northwest Indiana. The Dunes Acres Clubhouse, part of a lake resort community, was built c. 1925 and features whole-log construction. The Cypress House, built in 1933 for the Century of Progress in Chicago, was shipped to Beverly Shores and features whole-log construction with the feeling of European influence. Boy Scout Troops were also building cabins during the first half of the 20th century and may be more of the scale of the tourist camp cabins. One extant scout cabin was built c. 1935 on the Tippecanoe River in Marshall County. The large cabin is located on a scout campsite and features whole-log construction with chinking and a rubble stone porch wall and stone chimney.

² Good, pg. 6
³ Good, pg. 5
Developmental History/Additional historic context information

The Log Cabin Inn Tourist Camp is a short distance, approximately one-quarter mile, southeast of the south boundary of the unincorporated village of Benton. The south boundary of the village is the Elkhart River and is the point of origin for the small community. By 1828, Matthew Boyd had built a small cabin on the river and ferried pioneers across the river who were travelling from Fort Wayne into northern Indiana. Boyd built a stagecoach house, still extant, for travelers by the 1840s. The village was platted in 1832 by Henry Beane who opened the first store in 1830. The small community was at one time larger than the county seat located at Goshen, a short distance northwest of Benton. By the time the Lincoln Highway was designated on the Fort Wayne stagecoach route, running diagonally northwest/southeast through Elkhart County (modern U.S. 33), the small village of Benton had been out-competed by Elkhart and nearby Goshen (both on U.S. 33 northwest of Benton) in terms of economic growth. Still, with the aid of the designation, Benton maintained a few businesses and services for travelers. Benton had two blacksmiths, a general store and grocery between 1918 and 1923. The Lincoln Highway directories list a hotel and garage in the community in 1916 and 1918. In 1923, the Pine Tree Inn opened at the corner of the Lincoln Highway (U.S. 33) and County Road 42, between Goshen and Benton. The inn was located in a c. 1850 farmhouse that was converted to lodge travelers and served lunches and teas.

By 1949, the Benton community had retained some of its auto-related businesses. The Benton Garage, Wysong’s Mobile Garage & Filling Station, and Jake’s Restaurant would have offered services to travelers of the road, which had become known as U.S. 33. Martin’s Feed Mill and Welty’s general merchandise store, which also housed the village post office, were also in operation in 1949. Many of these same establishments continued into the late 1950s, including Welty’s and the Mobile Gas Station. The feed mill became known as the Benton Feed Mill, the Benton Restaurant and a furniture store were also located in the community in 1958. Besides the Log Cabin Tourist Camp southeast of town, a roadside fruit market was also located on the old Lincoln Highway southeast of the camp in 1958.
9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)


Death Certificates for Edward Scott (1943), Mabel Scott Rippey (1957), Robert Belik (1965), and Genevieve Belik (1972).


Garner, Kurt West. Historic Resources of the Lincoln Highway in Indiana, Multiple Properties Documentation Form (Draft), 2016.


Polk’s South Bend City Directory, 1945.


Log Cabin Inn Tourist Camp  
Elkhart County, IN


United States Federal Census:  1910, 1920, 1930, 1940

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

___ 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 # __________

Primary location of additional data:
___ State Historic Preservation Office
___ Other State agency
___ Federal agency
___ Local government
___ University
___ Other
    Name of repository: ________________________________

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): 039-243-85014

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 3.0

Use the UTM system
UTM References
Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927  or  ☑ NAD 1983

1. Zone: 16  Easting: 603957  Northing: 4595587
2. Zone:  Easting:  Northing:
3. Zone:  Easting:  Northing:
4. Zone:  Easting:  Northing:

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

All that certain parcel of land situate in the County of Elkhart, State of Indiana being known and designated as follows: Commencing at the intersection of the East line of Section Seven (7), Township Thirty-five (35) North, Range Seven (7) East, and the centerline of the Public Road known as U.S. Highway No. 33; thence North 76 degrees 48 minutes West, along the centerline of said highway, three hundred seventy (370) feet for a place of beginning; thence North 76 degrees 3 minutes West, along the centerline of said U.S. Highway No. 33 Six hundred twenty-five (625) feet; thence northwardly parallel to the East line of said Section, two hundred seventy-eight and seventy-nine hundredths (278.79) feet to an iron stake; thence South 76 degrees 3 minutes East parallel to the centerline of said U.S. Highway No. 33, six hundred twenty-five (625) feet to an iron stake; thence southwardly, parallel to the East line of said Section 7, two hundred seventy-eight and seventy-nine hundredths (278.79) feet to the place of beginning, excepting that part conveyed to the State Highway Department.

Except: A part of the Northeast Quarter of Section 7, Township 35 North, Range 7 East, Benton Township, Elkhart County, Indiana, more particularly described as follows: Commencing at the intersection of the East Line of said Section 7 and the centerline of U.S Highway No. 33; Thence North 76 degrees 48 minutes West 370 feet; thence North 76 degrees 3 minutes West 625 feet to the point of beginning of this description; thence North, parallel with the East line of said Section 7, a distance of 278.79 feet to an iron stake; thence South 76 degrees 3 minutes East, parallel to the centerline of said U.S. Highway No. 33, a distance of 245 feet to a point; thence Southwesterly to a point on the centerline of said U.S. Highway No. 33 that is 70 feet South 76 degrees 3 minutes East of the point of beginning; thence North 76 degrees 3 minutes West, along the centerline of said Highway, 70 feet to the point of beginning.
Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries include all of the developed portion of the tourist camp created for the Benton cabins. This three-acre trapezoidal lot is the extent of the boundary of the area purchased by the present owner. No developments for the tourist camp occurred outside of these boundaries.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Kurt West Garner
organization: Indiana Lincoln Highway Association/PIP
street & number: 12954 6th Road
city or town: Plymouth state: IN zip code: 46563
e-mail: kwgarner@kwgarner.com
telephone: 574-936-0613
date: May 31, 2017

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

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

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

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

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn’t need to be labeled on every photograph.
Log Cabin Inn Tourist Camp

Name of Property: Log Cabin Inn Tourist Camp

City or Vicinity: Benton

County: Elkhart  State: IN

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: September 21, 2016

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 18. Exterior stone fireplace, looking west

2 of 18. Back of tourist camp, looking east from the lower lawn area, below the bluff

3 of 18. Main cabin west façade, facing east
Name of Property: Log Cabin Inn Tourist Camp
City or Vicinity: Benton
County: Elkhart    State: IN
Photographer: Kurt West Garner
Date Photographed: September 21, 2016
Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Tourist cabins #1 & #2, facing east

Name of Property: Log Cabin Inn Tourist Camp
City or Vicinity: Benton
County: Elkhart    State: IN
Photographer: Kurt West Garner
Date Photographed: September 21, 2016
Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Tourist cabin #2, looking northwest at front facade

Name of Property: Log Cabin Inn Tourist Camp
City or Vicinity: Benton
County: Elkhart    State: IN
Photographer: Kurt West Garner
Date Photographed: September 21, 2016
Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Main cabin, looking northwest
Name of Property: Log Cabin Inn Tourist Camp

City or Vicinity: Benton

County: Elkhart  State: IN

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: September 21, 2016

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Family sleeping cabin, looking northeast

Name of Property: Log Cabin Inn Tourist Camp

City or Vicinity: Benton

County: Elkhart  State: IN

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: September 21, 2016

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Family sleeping cabin, looking southeast

Name of Property: Log Cabin Inn Tourist Camp

City or Vicinity: Benton

County: Elkhart  State: IN

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: September 21, 2016
Log Cabin Inn Tourist Camp  Elkhart County, IN

Name of Property                   County and State

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:
Main cabin, looking southwest at back façade and concrete steps

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Name of Property: Log Cabin Inn Tourist Camp

City or Vicinity: Benton

County: Elkhart       State: IN

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: September 21, 2016

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:
Family sleeping cabin bedroom on first floor, looking northeast

10 of 18.

Name of Property: Log Cabin Inn Tourist Camp

City or Vicinity: Benton

County: Elkhart       State: IN

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: September 21, 2016

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:
Kitchen/living area of family sleeping cabin, looking southeast

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Name of Property: Log Cabin Inn Tourist Camp

City or Vicinity: Benton

County: Elkhart       State: IN

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: September 21, 2016
Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Entry area of family sleeping cabin, looking northeast toward entry vestibule

12 of 18.

Name of Property: Log Cabin Inn Tourist Camp

City or Vicinity: Benton

County: Elkhart    State: IN

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: September 21, 2016

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Main cabin, looking southwest in dining room toward living area

13 of 18.

Name of Property: Log Cabin Inn Tourist Camp

City or Vicinity: Benton

County: Elkhart    State: IN

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: September 21, 2016

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Main cabin, looking northwest in front porch/living area

14 of 18.

Name of Property: Log Cabin Inn Tourist Camp

City or Vicinity: Benton

County: Elkhart    State: IN

Photographer: Kurt West Garner

Date Photographed: September 21, 2016
Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Main cabin, bathroom, looking northeast

15 of 18.

Name of Property: Log Cabin Inn Tourist Camp
City or Vicinity: Benton
County: Elkhart State: IN
Photographer: Kurt West Garner
Date Photographed: September 21, 2016

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Tourist cabin #1, looking northeast in sleeping area

16 of 18.

Name of Property: Log Cabin Inn Tourist Camp
City or Vicinity: Benton
County: Elkhart State: IN
Photographer: Kurt West Garner
Date Photographed: September 21, 2016

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera: Tourist cabin #2, looking southeast toward entry

17 of 18.

Name of Property: Log Cabin Inn Tourist Camp
City or Vicinity: Benton
County: Elkhart State: IN
Photographer: Kurt West Garner
Date Photographed: September 21, 2016
Log Cabin Inn Tourist Camp

Elkhart County, IN

Name of Property

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

Tourist cabin #2, looking northwest

18 of 18.

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 100 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.