

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY  
BUILDING AND SAFETY DIVISION

Marin County Architectural Commission  
(Ord No. 3619, 2014; 19.04.028 MCC)

**Application for Local Registration of Architectural Significance**

This completed Application Form constitutes a request before the Marin County Architectural Commission for determination of architectural significance pursuant to the following guidelines. Determinations of architectural significance are limited to the unincorporated jurisdictional area of Marin County, and impose the application of California Historical Building Code provisions for related building permit applications for the purpose of preserving features deemed to have architectural significance and facilitating the use of alternative materials and methods of construction.

**Architecturally significant structure** is any existing or future structure or property, collection of structures, and their related sites deemed by the COMMISSION to have present or future local importance to the history, architecture, well-being or culture of an area, and inventoried along with its significant features within the Marin County Register of Architecturally Significant Structures.

**Architecturally significant feature** is a specific character-defining feature of a structure that is determined by the COMMISSION to have local importance, and is expressly inventoried with the structure within the Marin County Register of Architecturally Significant Structures.

The above qualitative descriptions of both *architecturally significant structure* and *architecturally significant feature* are exemplary only and are not intended to exclude other possibilities. Eligible structures, designs and features which the COMMISSION may deem architecturally significant are not limited to these descriptions. It is the intent of the COMMISSION to exercise sensitivity and latitude in the application of what is considered to have local importance to the history, architecture, well-being or culture of Marin County and its communities.

**Applicant information:**

*Brenda Roberts, Board Director & Building*  
Name *T. Grounds Chew, West Point Inn Association* Application date *2/11/2016*  
Address *1000 Panoramic Hwy, Mill Valley, 94941*  
*PO Box 796, San Anselmo, CA 94929*  
Telephone *415-572-2349* Email *BrendaR2845@gmail.com*

**Property information:**

Property description *West Point Inn, built 1904; 7 professors Quarters, 5 Cottages and 4 additional outbuildings*  
Property owner's name *Marin Municipal Water District* APN \_\_\_\_\_  
Property address *100 Old Railroad Grade Fire Road, Mill Valley*

**List the total number of structures and/or features included in this application**

Type	Quantity	Description
Structure	(1)	294 square foot cabin for ADA Community on existing historic site.
Features	<u>(0)</u>	Exterior & interior to mirror Inn/cabins built between 1904-1920.
Total	1	

**Other national, state or local historic or architectural certifications or registrations awarded this property or project:**

In December 2011, the property was placed on the National Registry of Historic Places (National Register) and listed in the California Register of Historic Resources. Notification letter and application are attached).

**Summary Paragraph of project description:**

The WPI Association and the Marin Water District are proposing to build a cabin on the inn property, adjacent to the existing structures. The new cabin is designed to meet the requirements of the American Disability Act while also being compatible with the Inn—features that have been determined to have architectural significance. Our goal is to provide persons with disabilities who stay at the Inn to have experiences similar with those of other guests who visit and stay overnight at this 112 year old Inn. Many aspects of the Inn have been preserved to catapult one back into the early 1900s. To provide some background: The Inn has very little electricity and what exists is totally off grid and provided via solar panels. All cabins and Inn's sleeping quarters are without electricity. The common areas in the Inn are lighted by propane gas. Heat is from wood burning fireplaces or potbellied stoves that are propane fueled. (The cabins, other than the new cabin do not have heat or hot water). These propane stoves are modern highly efficient equipment, but look old. Floors throughout the Inn and cabins are hardwood (Doug Fir and Oak). Bathrooms and toilets in the Inn and cabins are generally shared. Guests in cabins 10, 11 & 12 share an outdoor toilet. Our intent with the ADA cabin is to provide a place that is safe, convenient and provides the utilities to adequately meet the needs of a myriad of unique disabilities within the accessible community. At the same time, our aim is to build a cabin that does not look new, but that visually fits within the historic site as if it had always been on the mountain.

**RATIONALE FOR BUILDING THE STRUCTURE**

We have designed the cabin to mirror the architecturally significant features of the Inn buildings to create a continuity with the historic status and spirit of the Inn & its cabins; thereby making the new cabin another integral component of the 10 other structures on this historic site. At the same time, our goal is to provide a safe and inviting environment for the accessible community.

Currently, the Toby Cabin is our “mostly accessible cabin”. The structure was once used for storage and remained vacant and in dis-repair. Although the cabin was retrofitted in 1990’s, its condition is considered, at best, rustic. The exterior of the cabin is shingled and the roof is asphalt shingle. The foundation is made up of cement blocks supporting old Doug Fir Timbers. The entrance to the bathroom is partially angled and the door way is shorter in height than a standard 80” door frame. Interior floors are not level. Although the cabin has a toilet and sink, there are no other amenities such as hot water, shower, outlets, lighting, or heat. The cabin is accessible via a very elaborate ramping system off the Inn’s back deck. This cabin was a well-intentioned gesture by MMWD and the Inn’s membership to serve the accessible community. With the new cabin we will do much better.

**Summary paragraph describing why the listed structures and/or features merit a determination of architectural significance.**

Why is it important to make this structure architecturally significant? Since 1896, there were 6 remarkable buildings built by the mountain railroad and located on Mt Tamalpais, including the Inn. Of those 6 buildings, only the Inn and its cabins remain from that period. Unlike many historic places, the Inn still exists in its original setting—standing in the wilderness where it first provided shelter. Those in the local community who are familiar with the Inn describe it as a “vestige of hospitality from a lost era”. No longer visited by the train or stage coach, the Inn continues to welcome all visitors.

There are hikers and bikers from all over the bay area, the country; and, in some cases, the world, who are thirsty, tired, cold, hot or wet and come upon the West Point Inn. As they stand at the bottom of the stairs, they look up in awe and marvel that they have traveled the dirt road of Old Railroad Grade or Stage Coach Road and arrived at this beautiful Inn right out of the early 1900s. As many guests before them, they find the Inn a magical, comforting and welcoming place. Now imagine a small child or a young or older person in a wheel chair, on crutches or using a cane taking a trip down the railroad grade for the first time for an overnight stay at the Inn.

Our goal is to provide, as close as possible, a comparable overnight experience for both the ADA community and general public by building a cabin that fits the fabric and substance of the historic site and meets ADA codes. The core goal of our vision is to create a “stepping back in time” for the ADA community that is comparable to that of the general public who experience the magic at this historic site of an overnight vastly different from anywhere else in the Bay Area.

Specifically, the MMWD and the WPIA are asking the Marin County Architectural Commission to approve:

“Designation of architectural significance for the construction of one new fully accessible cabin, built of like-materials and using traditional construction methods, to provide a user experience for all groups represented within the ADA community and comparable to that which the old cabins provide to those not requiring accessibility or special needs and protections for other

debilitating conditions; and to blend this new cabin into the existing historic fabric and site at the West Point Inn.”

To our knowledge and understanding, this building is a unique 21<sup>st</sup> century effort to provide to the accessible community an early 20<sup>th</sup> century experience that they have never had the opportunity to have before and is not available anywhere in Marin County.

Attachments:

- National Registration Notification Letter
- Application for the National Register
- Exterior View of Existing Toby Cabin (no heat, shower or hot water)
- 1937 Map drawn by Roosevelt’s CCC-Old Pathways before Existing Accessible Ramp (1990’s)

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NOTE: Attach architectural significance narrative, along with supporting documentation to this application, as needed.

CONFIRMATIONS BY APPLICANT AND PROPERTY OWNER IN ACCEPTANCE OF THE TERMS AND RESPONSIBILITIES ASSUMED UNDER THIS VOLUNTARY APPLICATION FOR LOCAL REGISTRATION OF ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

I hereby affirm under penalty of perjury by my/our initials below, I/we certify to each of the following:

1. BR I understand and agree, as the applicant, that my application to this voluntary registry is elective and deliberate, and that I have the option to terminate my application or registration upon notification to the Marin County Architectural Commission at the address provided in this form.

2. BR I understand and agree that any benefits anticipated in association with this application, or any or all benefits accrued to me as a result of this application, may be denied, voided or revoked by the County of Marin on the basis of incomplete or inaccurate information or my failure to demonstrate compliance with any of the specific requirements of any permits subsequently issued on the basis of this application. I further understand and agree that approvals necessary to determine a finding of architectural significance for this application are not guaranteed and are subject to review of information provided to the Commissioners.

3. BR I agree to save, indemnify and keep harmless the County of Marin against liabilities, judgments, costs and expenses which may in any way accrue against said County in consequence of the approval of this application for local determination and/or registration of architectural significance.

I hereby affirm under penalty of perjury by my signature below, I have read, understood and agree to the terms and limitations described in this voluntary Application for Local Registration of Architectural Significance; and the information I have provided herein is correct.

Applicant signature Linda Helms Date 3-21-2016

Property owner signature [Signature] Date 03-21-16

-The following area reserved for Commission use only -

Pursuant to the express intent and authority within section 19.04.028 of Marin County Code and Ordinance No. 3619, 2014; and in accordance with the duly adopted bylaws of the Marin County Architectural Commission; we render the following determination:

APPLICATION APPROVED

APPLICATION DENIED

Commission basis for and extent of determination:

SEE ATTACHED

This determination made by the MARIN COUNTY ARCHITECTURAL COMMISSION, during a publically noticed meeting on this 7<sup>TH</sup> day of APRIL, 2016.



Chair, MARIN COUNTY ARCHITECTURAL COMMISSION

ATTEST:



Secretary, MARIN COUNTY ARCHITECTURAL COMMISSION

April 7, 2016 Architectural Commission Basis for and Extent of Determination

RE: West Point Inn Application

Commissioners unanimously approve a designation of architectural significance for the construction of one new fully accessible cabin, built of like-materials and using traditional construction methods (like those used previously on-site), to provide a user experience for all groups represented within the ADA community, and comparable to that which the existing cabins provide to those not requiring accessibility or special needs and protections for other debilitating conditions; and to blend this new cabin into the existing historic fabric and site at the West Point Inn for the following reasons:

1. We find the architectural concept, synthesizing faithful adherence to historic preservation and expansion of universal access, with minimal compromise of either, to have local and meaningful importance to the history, culture and well-being of Marin County;
2. We find the architectural concept will aid affordability of construction practices in the application of alternative construction design, materials and methods used to achieve the unique project goal of providing true equivalent facilitation to the enjoyment of this historic site;
3. We find a designation of architectural significance will facilitate the lawful use of alternative construction design, materials and methods for this project, thereby supporting lawful construction activity, enhancing owner equity in the improvement of the property and contributing to the well-being of the community through application of Part 8 of title 24 of the California Code of Regulations.

We, therefore, herein determine the architectural concept, as expressed in our basis for determination, to be architecturally significant, in accordance with Marin County Ordinance 3619 (2014) and Chapter 19.23 of Marin County Code; and submit this application, along with our determination, to the Marin County Register of Architecturally Significant Sites, Structures and Features.





**OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**

P.O. BOX 942896  
SACRAMENTO, CA 94296 0001  
(916) 445-7000 Fax: (916) 445-7053  
calshpo@parks.ca.gov



December 30, 2011

D.S. (Dewey) Livingston  
Historian  
West Point Inn Association  
PO Box 296  
Inverness, California 94937

RE: West Point Inn Listing on the  
National Register of Historic Places

Dear Mr. Livingston:

I am pleased to notify you that on December 22, 2011, the above-named property was placed on the National Register of Historic Places (National Register). As a result of being placed on the National Register, this property has also been listed in the California Register of Historical Resources, pursuant to Section 4851(a)(2) of the Public Resources Code.

Placement on the National Register affords a property the honor of inclusion in the nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation and provides a degree of protection from adverse effects resulting from federally funded or licensed projects. Registration provides a number of incentives for preservation of historic properties, including special building codes to facilitate the restoration of historic structures, and certain tax advantages.

There are no restrictions placed upon a private property owner with regard to normal use, maintenance, or sale of a property listed in the National Register. However, a project that may cause substantial adverse changes in the significance of a registered property may require compliance with local ordinances or the California Environmental Quality Act. In addition, registered properties damaged due to a natural disaster may be subject to the provisions of Section 5028 of the Public Resources Code regarding demolition or significant alterations, if imminent threat to life safety does not exist.

If you have any questions or require further information, please contact the Registration Unit at (916) 445-7008.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Milford Wayne Donaldson".

Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA  
State Historic Preservation Officer

Enclosure: National Register Notification of Listing

January 5, 2009

To: **Mr. Steve Phelps**  
**Facilities and Watershed Manager**  
**Marin Municipal Water District**  
220 Nellen Avenue  
Corte Madera, CA 94925

From: Fred Runner  
West Point Inn Historian  
415.302.7677 / OneSoundFred@mac.com

Re: West Point Inn – Draft Application to the National Register

Dear Steve,

This is the latest draft of the application to put the West Point Inn on the National Register of Historic Places, written by Dewey Livingston and myself. We are very nearly done, with only a few bits of information needed for completion. (eg: We need some help from the MMWD describing the coordinates —boundaries of this application.)

There are 4 sections:

- 1) Basic information on the West Point site
- 2) [Section 7] "Narrative Description," describes the buildings at West Point
- 3) [Section 8] is a brief history of the Inn, very nicely written by Dewey.
- 4) A small collection of photos. We will want to add to it, including some old photos and some more modern reference shots.

We look forward to your thoughts and comments. See you Thursday.

Thanks in advance and Happy New Year,

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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

### 1. Name of Property

historic name West Point Inn

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Location

street & number Old Railroad Grade, Mt. Tamalpais  not for publication

city or town Mill Valley  vicinity

state California code CA county Marin code 041 zip code 94941

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

I hereby certify that this \_\_\_ 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 \_\_\_ 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 \_\_\_ local

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

\_\_\_ entered in the National Register

\_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register

\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the National Register

\_\_\_ removed from the National Register

\_\_\_ other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

West Point Inn  
Name of Property

Marin County, California  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
8	1	buildings
		district
4	3	site
		structure
		object
13	4	<b>Total</b>

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

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

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

- DOMESTIC: hotel
- RECREATION: outdoors
- TRANSPORTATION: rail-related

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

- DOMESTIC: hotel
- RECREATION: outdoors
- SOCIAL: clubhouse

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

- LATE VICTORIAN: shingle style

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

- foundation: STONE, CONCRETE
- walls: WOOD shingle
- roof: ASPHALT
- other:

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### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

#### Summary Paragraph

The West Point Inn is comprised of a wood-shingled, two story building and a number of smaller outbuildings and cabins. It is located on the southern slope of Mount Tamalpais, the highest and most prominent peak in Marin County and the northern San Francisco Bay area. Perched on an exposed ridge at an elevation of 1,800 feet above sea level, the Inn affords a panoramic view of southern Marin County, Muir Woods National Monument, San Francisco and Oakland, Mt. Diablo, San Francisco Bay and the Pacific Ocean. The location is exposed to extremes of weather, above the coastal fog line; it can be very hot in the summer but with mild winters and generally windy throughout the year. Vegetation is characterized by dense manzanita scrub with few trees in the vicinity, although redwood, coast live oak, Douglas-fir and other species of tree are found nearby.

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### Narrative Description

The West Point Inn, built in 1904, together with its adjacent cabins and landscape features, is a unique and rare surviving example of a San Francisco Bay Area rustic mountain lodge. Constructed in the era of train travel and during a period when hiking was among the most popular recreational pursuits, the Inn exemplifies turn-of-the-twentieth-century outdoors-oriented tourism and the architectural styles that served to enhance the visitor's experience. The West Point Inn is regionally significant under Criterion A for its role in the increasing popularity of Mt. Tamalpais as a refuge from the ills of the city and providing respite and adventure for generations of people from all over the world (theme: recreation). The Inn served as a way station on the Mt. Tamalpais & Muir Woods Scenic Railway and hub for stagecoach service to Willow Camp (theme: transportation). The Inn is also significant under Criterion C as an intact example of Bay Area shingle-style architecture supplemented by rustic vernacular single-room mountain cabins, all remaining in their original isolated setting and possessing a high level of historical integrity.

The Inn is reached by a two mile-long dirt road, part of the abandoned railroad grade of the Mill Valley & Mt. Tamalpais Scenic Railway, later called the Mt. Tamalpais & Muir Woods Railway (1896-1930). This road, which practically encircles the Inn grounds and terminates near the East Peak summit of Mt. Tamalpais, is a popular hiking and multi-use trail. Paved roads provide access to the Railroad Grade from Mill Valley, the nearest town, and other Bay Area cities.

The grounds of the West Point Inn comprise about one acre of land, and includes the inn building, two sheds, five cabins, a stone stairway, and the grounds as surrounded by the railroad grade. The property's topography ranges from sloping at the inn site to steep at the far cabins. Vegetation within the property includes native plants such as manzanita, live oak, and bay laurel, as well as non-natives such as Monterey pine. A native redwood tree was planted in front of the inn some years ago.

The West Point Inn is a wood frame building consisting of three sections: the original two-story inn (built in 1904); a one-story addition (1920); and a non-historic innkeeper's addition (1982). Adjacent to the inn is an old (circa 1920) former chicken shed. East of the shed is a line of five cabins, numbered 1 through 4 (circa 1915), and the other known as the "honeymoon cabin" (1918). An outhouse-styled toilet room near cabin 3 appears to have been built in the 1940s or 1950s. Also on the grounds are a non-historic wood shed and a substantial disabled access ramp at the center of the complex. Visitors reach the inn from the railroad grade on a stone stairway and path that leads to wooden stairs, part of the inn's porch. A trail provides access to cabins 2, 3 and 4.

The West Point Inn was built by the Mill Valley & Mt. Tamalpais Scenic Railway Company in 1904 and has served day and overnight visitors almost uninterrupted since then. The railway company leased the buildings from the Marin Municipal Water District until the rail service ended in 1930. The water district owns the buildings and surrounding lands, leaving operation of the inn to the non-profit West Point Inn Association.

The West Point Inn retains historic integrity, with its original layout, buildings, setting and feel. Architectural details including original windows and doors remain in place on all contributing structures, with few exceptions (eg: double hung windows in a few upstairs rooms). The interiors have seen little modification except for the inn's kitchen, which has been sensitively modernized. One small building, a shed used for making acetylene gas from when the inn first opened through the 1920s, was removed at an unknown date. Non-contributing features include the innkeeper's quarters, designed as an architecturally compatible addition, and the ADA-required wheelchair ramp, which intrudes on the historic scene. Minor non-contributing features include a small wood shed and a supply shed.

*[See continuation sheets]*

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property West Point Inn

County and State Marin County, California

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)  
\_\_\_\_\_

Section number 7

Page 2

*Inn building:*

The West Point Inn was built in three stages, two of which fell in the historic period. The original Inn, a hipped-roof two-story shingle lodge with dormer windows overlooking the western slopes of Mt. Tamalpais, was built in 1904. In 1916 the small porch was enlarged to the configuration in which it remains today, affording breathtaking views of the San Francisco Bay Area. By that time at least four cabins had been built to augment the lodging needs. In 1920 the owners added a dining room, a roomy hall extending from the back of the Inn (it was later called the Rec Room and today is known as "The Member's Lounge."). The West Point Inn Association added a much-needed innkeeper quarters in 1982, virtually extending the 1920 addition with a split-level two-story living unit designed to complement the Inn's historical architecture.

The first Inn building is a two-story wood frame building with four rooms downstairs (sitting room, kitchen, pantry, shower, the latter originally being a small open porch) and eight guest rooms upstairs, one of which has been transformed into a fire escape and closet. There is a basement under the west part of the building with crawl space under the east side. A small bathroom was added a few years after the inn opened on the northwest end of the upper floor. The Inn has two stone fireplace/chimneys, one of which is operable, located on opposite sides of the building. The long hipped roof has a gable on the northwest corner. There are two hipped dormers on the front roof face, three flat dormers on the rear, and a flat dormer for the added bathroom on the west side; all clad in composition shingles. The exterior walls are painted cedar shingles, and flare at the base where they met the original stone foundations. The stone and mortar foundation has been supplemented with an invisible concrete foundation installed in the basement.

A roomy porch wraps around the southwest and southeast sides of the Inn. It has wood floors, rustic log posts as well as milled posts, and a wood railing. A wooden stairway leads from the porch to a stone pathway and the original stairs to the former railroad grade.

There are two main types of exterior windows on the original Inn building, all intact. The lower floor windows are six-over-nine double hung sash, six facing southwest, two facing northwest and two on the northeast corner end. A clouded window provides light to the shower room. The dormers on the front have two-over-four double hung sash. Doors on the building are wood and appear to be the original installations.

The interior rooms on the lower floor provide common spaces. The largest is the sitting room, with a large stone-and-brick fireplace, painted wood paneling and tongue-and-groove wood floors. The kitchen, equipped with a propane refrigerator and two large stoves, has painted wood panel walls with built-in shelves. There is a sink and two skylights. The pantry is dominated by clear-finished wood lockers and a large table. The wood paneling is painted. The shower room was once an open corner porch. Its painted wood shingle walls were once exterior, with infill walls of bead-board wood paneling. The remodeling was apparently done in the 1940s.

The upstairs lodging rooms are reached by a narrow stairway leaving the common room that splits in two directions half way up. Four rooms face the southwest, three the northeast. All have painted wood paneling, partially sloping ceilings, wood doors, dormer windows, and gaslights. The northeasternmost room has been converted to a storage room, with part of its entry rebuilt to accommodate a fire escape. There is a small bathroom, added before 1910, and a few small storage spaces including a linen closet.

The 1920 members lounge addition is a long, gable-roofed room with a composition roof and painted wood shingle exterior walls. There is a row of five fifteen-light fixed windows on the northwest façade, which were restored in 1998, and a row of three fifteen-light casement windows on the southeast. The interior is unpainted Douglas-fir T&G paneling, including the ceiling. A stone fire place graces the north end of the room.

All the large interior rooms are fitted with gaslights; the fixtures are non-historic but parts of the original fixtures remain. There is plumbing only in the bathroom, kitchen, and shower.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property West Point Inn

County and State Marin County, California

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)  
\_\_\_\_\_

Section number 7

Page 3

The 1982 innkeeper quarters was constructed onto the north end of the 1920 addition. On the west side the gable continues from the recreation room, and on the east the addition features a transverse gable that forms a second story to that part of the quarters. The addition has matching shingle siding and roof treatments. The addition, while architecturally compatible, does not contribute to the significance and integrity of the original Inn building. The fire escape on the 1904 building is also non-contributing.

The West Point Inn is in good condition and possesses excellent historical integrity. Its alterations are few, with a mostly intact interior and exterior that has retained its character-defining features. It is in its original setting, which has changed little throughout the years. The surroundings are a protected natural area, and the view is the same one enjoyed by guests for more than a century.

*Chicken Shed:*

This simple frame shed was constructed between 1904 and 1920 and served as a chicken coop and storage building. Measuring 10 by 12 feet, with a 4-foot shed addition, it has a shed roof clad in composition shingles and board-and-batten siding. The shed rests on a concrete foundation with a concrete floor, and a rock wall lines the northeastern elevation. There is an old door as entry, repaired with plywood pieces on the interior. A fixed, six-light window faces northeast. It is in fair condition.

*Cabin 1:*

Built before 1920, Cabin 1 is an irregularly shaped building measuring roughly 12 by 12 feet with an original bathroom extension measuring six by seven feet. There is a "notch" of about four feet square on one corner to accommodate a protruding outcrop on the rocky hillside on which the cabin is built. The exterior walls are shingled and the cabin has a shed roof with a partially covered porch/deck forming a gable. A pair of hinged, two-light windows are set in a mock-bay window facing the narrow porch on the southwest elevation, and a small, six-light casement window faces northwest. A fixed, six-light window faces the southeast deck and a second door, unused, provides entry directly to the bathroom extension. A small, single-light window faces northeast. The single-wall construction reveals the original vertical boards on the interior, now painted white. The floor is tongue-and-groove. Cabin 1 has been modified to provide access for people with disabilities with a wide modern door and remodeled accessible bathroom. Additional structural bracing with 2x6s has strengthened the building, two skylights have been added in the roof, but most historical features remain intact. It is in good condition.

*"Honeymoon Cabin":*

Originally labeled as Cabin 2, this is the most substantial and well crafted of the Inn's five cabins. It was built in 1918 by Dr. Washington Dodge, a survivor of the sinking of the *RMS Titanic*. The rectangular building measures about 12 by 16 feet and is set into an excavated hillside on the north and supported with posts on the south. It has a gable roof of composition shingles, and the exterior walls are clad in wood shingles installed in a distinctive design, with a brick chimney on the east-facing wall. There are small and wide double-hung bathroom windows on the west side and a set of sliding and fixed windows facing east, all with relatively fancy trim painted green.

The cabin consists of a main room, a small bathroom with toilet and sink (a cold water shower was removed because it caused dry rot), and an open porch that faces San Francisco and the Golden Gate. The interior is distinguished by a brick fireplace (removed from service after the 1989 earthquake), old finished plywood paneled walls and ceiling with redwood trim, fine plate molding, and tongue-and-groove flooring. The bathroom features painted V-groove paneling, linoleum flooring, an antique corner sink, and a small utility closet. Double, eight-light doors access the porch. The rail on the porch has been raised for safety reasons. The cabin had been wired for electricity and some antique fixtures remain. It is in good condition and retains excellent historical integrity.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property West Point Inn

County and State Marin County, California

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)  
\_\_\_\_\_

Section number 7

Page 4

### *Cabins 2, 3 and 4:*

These comprise a row of three almost identical cabins, all constructed circa 1915 on a steep hillside overlooking the railroad grade and the scenic southerly view. They are the easternmost buildings in the complex and are reached by a narrow foot trail from the Inn. They are perched on tall, cross-braced wood posts on concrete piers. The cabins measure roughly 13 feet square with additional six-foot deep open porches facing south. All are simple, gable-roofed cabins with original single-wall construction of board-and-batten now sheathed in shingles on the exterior. Vents under the gable ends allow cross ventilation. With generous two-foot eaves, the rafter ends were cut to curve upward at the ends, producing a distinctive profile. Each roof has been surfaced with composition shingles, and metal gutters and drainpipes have been installed along the eaves. Each cabin has a rustic plank door providing entrance on the uphill side at grade with the access trail.

The cabins feature single-wall construction and are not insulated. The interior walls are unfinished and show the old wood planks of the original construction, but additional structural bracing with 2x4s has been added for stability. Each has older tongue-and-groove wood floors. The short but wide porch is reached through a set of Dutch doors and features an outdoor shower and sink as well as evidence of former outdoor cool storage for perishables at cabins 2 and 3. The exterior walls within the porches (south-facing) show the original board-and-batten siding.

The cabins have seen varied modifications, including foundation bracing, manufactured outdoor shower floors (which have reduced the threat of dry rot), a short vertical extension of the porch railings, plywood sheathing in some of the roof structures, and some alteration in the decorative bracing on the south-facing gable ends on the porches. Cabins 3 and 4 have newer double doors to the porches, constructed of plywood and lacking window lights. These doors appear to have been built in the 1950s.

The first in the row from the main Inn, Cabin 2 retains its older double Dutch outer doors constructed from planks and featuring four-light fixed windows. Repairs on the western eaves have eliminated the original "swooped" eave design, and galvanized metal gutters have been installed. Cabin 2 is in fair to good condition.

The second of the three cabins, Cabin 3 has an original plank front door entry and the plywood Dutch doors appear to have been installed in the 1950s, while the internal structure has been supplemented with additional bracing and sistered rafters and framing. Cabin 3 is in fair to good condition.

The last of the cabins on the trail, Cabin 4 is virtually the same as its neighbors except for the lack of a small porch extension apparently for storage of perishables. Its front door has been rebuilt, perhaps in the 1970s or 1980s, in a slightly different design and the plywood Dutch doors appear to have been installed in the 1950s. Cabin 4 is in fair to good condition.

Character-defining features of the cabins include single wall construction with exposed framing and old siding, original doors, siding remnants within the porch enclosures, roof design, and their building footprints and location.

### *Outhouse:*

This small toilet facility, located on the eastern trail between and across from Cabins 3 and 4, appears to have been constructed in the 1940s or 1950s. It measures 6 by 4.5 feet and was constructed of full-dimension 2x4s and cove siding. It has a gable roof, a narrow door with matching siding, a small, clouded window, and concrete foundation. It is in good condition.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property West Point Inn

County and State Marin County, California

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)  
\_\_\_\_\_

Section number 7

Page 5

*Landscape Features:*

The West Point Inn is distinguished by its location on the slopes of Mt. Tamalpais. It is surrounded by protected natural landscape and accessed by four popular and historic hiking trails. Historic landscape features include a stone stairway system at the entrance on the southwest side of the Inn that dates from around 1904 or shortly thereafter; the main sign near the front of the building (1917); the trail to Cabins 2, 3, and 4; and various plants, native and introduced, that have been part of the landscape of the Inn for decades including manzanita, live oak, redwood, bay laurel, and Monterey pine. Minor landscape alterations include the rerouting of the path between the Inn and Cabin 1, in order to provide access for people with disabilities, and elimination of a short driveway between the railroad grade on the north and the former chicken shed. The old railroad grade, while not included as a contributing feature in this nomination because it is a specific, separate linear structure in itself, is an important part of the surrounding landscape that defines the West Point Inn property.

Missing features

All of the original West Point Inn buildings remain except for the small acetylene shed once located at the railroad grade near the south corner of the Inn and mentioned earlier. Across the railroad grade to the west once stood a shed that acted as stables for the horse-drawn stage line; it predated the West Point Inn and was removed by 1920.

Non-contributing features

The most prominent non-contributing feature is the innkeeper's rooms, added in 1982 and detailed previously. This addition was designed to complement the architecture of the original Inn. The extensive wooden ramp that leads from the Inn's main porch to Cabin 1, to provide access for people with disabilities, also does not contribute. The ramp, built in 1998 and required by accessibility regulations, affects the open feel of the grounds and introduced a large structural component to the grounds. An architecturally compatible, small, board-and-batten wood storage shed with hipped roof has been installed north of the Inn building, and an open shed next to that.

*Railroad Grade:*

A short portion of the 6.7-mile former rail bed of the Mt. Tamalpais & Muir Woods Railway, constructed in 1896, is a dominant feature of the West Point Inn grounds. This location is where the rail route made a tight curve from west to east, marking the line's westernmost point (hence the name West Point). The location, where rail passengers could disembark and board a horse-drawn stage to points west, is an important factor in locating the Inn here. The 12-foot wide dirt roadway almost entirely surrounds the Inn property as it makes its arc for the final ascent to the peak of Mt. Tamalpais. The roadway is now used as a multi-use recreational trail called Old Railroad Grade, and for restricted access by vehicles servicing the Inn and surrounding municipal watershed lands. The Old Stage Road (built 1902) meets the Old Railroad Grade at West Point. The hand-carved road that once carried stagecoaches between West Point and the beach is also a popular multi-use trail, connecting the West Point Inn and Mt. Tamalpais State Park's Pan Toll ranger station two miles away. Despite this importance in defining the Inn property and historic significance, the railroad grade is a separate structure and so is not part of this nomination.

**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)

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

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)

Property is:

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

**Period of Significance (justification)**

The start of the period of significance reflects the year of construction; the end of the period is 50 years ago, since the Inn is still used for its original purpose.

**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)**

N/A

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION

ARCHITECTURE

TRANSPORTATION

**Period of Significance**

1904-1959

**Significant Dates**

1904, 1916, 1920, 1942-1945

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria)

The West Point Inn, built in 1904, together with its adjacent cabins and landscape features, is a unique and rare surviving example of a San Francisco Bay Area rustic mountain lodge. Constructed in the era of train travel and during a period when hiking was among the most popular recreational pursuits, the Inn exemplifies turn-of-the-twentieth-century outdoors-oriented tourism and the architectural styles that served to enhance the visitor's experience. The West Point Inn is regionally significant under Criterion A for its role in the increasing popularity of Mt. Tamalpais as a refuge from the ills of the city and providing respite and adventure for generations of people from all over the world (theme: recreation). The Inn served as a way station on the Mt. Tamalpais & Muir Woods Railway and hub for stagecoach service to Willow Camp (theme: transportation). The Inn is also significant under Criterion C as an intact example of Bay Area shingle-style architecture supplemented by rustic vernacular single-room mountain cabins, all remaining in their original isolated setting and possessing a high level of historical integrity.

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

The West Point Inn is inextricably connected to the San Francisco Bay Area and the growth of that city and its surrounding cities and suburbs. The Inn reflects a time when hiking and touring boomed, as hiking clubs were established on area mountain slopes and the public called for more recreational lands and opportunities. It was in this period that the environmental movement got its start, as President Theodore Roosevelt declared neighboring Muir Woods a National Monument and John Muir saw his most active period as a leading force in the infant years of the nationwide conservation movement. The Inn was designed to reflect the rustic charms of the area, with wood shingles and stone fireplaces.

Mt. Tamalpais has been celebrated by nearby peoples in various ways for centuries. The Coast Miwok Indians reportedly considered the mountain a mysterious or dangerous location, and newly arrived settlers took the old stories and added mythical and romantic legends such as the "Sleeping Lady" myth. The Indians and their successors used the mountain's slope for hunting game, as subsistence evolved into sport. Since the 1870s the mountain's beauty has been evoked in poetry, paintings, music and theater, all spurred by the popularity of hiking, hunting, natural studies and the pursuit of art.

The mountain's slopes attracted men of wealth who built estates in Mill Valley, Kentfield and other once-wild locations. Prominent businessmen such as Albert Kent, Hall McAllister and Sidney Cushing bought property in the shadow of the mountain while others from San Francisco constructed trails and cabins in the woods. The Tamalpais Sportsman's Club and other organizations leased acreage, created camps and eventually built clubhouses. The Bohemian Club held its early outdoor events on the south slope at what is today Muir Woods.

The first detailed hiking map of the mountain was published in 1898. A common destination was West Peak (the mountain is capped by three peaks), at the time the highest spot north of the Golden Gate. Hikers boarded ferries and transferred to the Marin County's narrow gauge train system, which deposited the visitors at various popular stops along the way. Hiking clubs, most from San Francisco and often reflecting a nationalist theme (German clubs were especially popular), held regular group hikes and camping expeditions. Some clubs, and also private entrepreneurs, eventually built lodges of varying size, almost entirely on the south face of Mt. Tamalpais with a panoramic view to San Francisco.

Besides trails, one road offered access to the peaks before 1900. Eldridge Grade, constructed in 1884, provided access for wagons from the Ross Valley to near the summit of West Peak. The construction of the Mill Valley & Mt. Tamalpais Scenic Railway in 1896 changed the patterns of access to the mountain, bringing people in great numbers to the summit and stops in between.

During the 1890s, the Tamalpais Land & Water Company controlled the south slopes of the mountain. Company employees hatched the idea of a railroad that would carry passengers on a thrilling ride from Mill Valley to East Peak where a hotel would be built. With the financial backing of many prominent local landowners who stood to gain in increased land values, the Mill Valley & Mt. Tamalpais Scenic Railway opened to the public in August 1896. It was soon dubbed "The Crookedest Railroad in the World" for its approximately 281 curves along the 8.19-mile route, ascending a grade varying from five to seven percent. Geared steam locomotives pushed coaches up the mountain to the newly constructed Tavern of Tamalpais where guests could eat with a spectacular view of the San Francisco Bay Area, or stay overnight in a limited number of rooms. In a later development, open-air gravity cars allowed a thrilling ride as passengers coasted down the grade and onto a new spur (built in 1907) into Muir Woods where a rustic inn would be built as a terminus. Within years the mountain railroad became internationally known as an important scenic attraction not missed by visitors to San Francisco.

*[See continuation sheets]*

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property West Point Inn

County and State Marin County, California

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)  
\_\_\_\_\_

Section number 8

Page 2

The Mill Valley & Mt. Tamalpais Scenic Railway constructed the West Point Inn in 1904 at a significant spot on the mountain railroad. The westernmost point on the railroad was at a tight 252° curve known as West Point. At this location a wagon road served by a stage service commenced for the trip to the popular summer enclaves of Willow Camp (Stinson Beach) and Bolinas. The West Point Inn would not only accommodate patrons of the stage service, but also provide additional lodging for railway patrons, with the Tavern of Tamalpais being inadequate for the crowds that were attracted to the mountain despite its enlargement in 1900. West Point was simpler alternative to hikers on the many new trails being developed on the mountain, and the Inn became a focal point for early Tamalpais hikers. Guests spent daylight hours out exploring the mountain and little time in the small rooms of the Inn.

The railroad company built the West Point Inn on property owned by the North Coast Water Company, nestled within the sharp curve of the railroad grade. The initial building was well designed in the popular shingle style preferred in California at that time, especially in Berkeley and nearby Mill Valley. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, California architects, including Greene & Greene, Bernard Maybeck and Ernest Coxhead created a popular style that was especially apt in coastal redwood country. In utilizing local materials such as redwood and native stone, incorporating the surrounding landscape in the design, and making the most of views and nearby vegetation, such buildings became a significant milestone in California architecture. The name of the architect is unknown, but was undoubtedly a member of the shingle-style movement; it reportedly cost \$2,500 to build. The handsome two-story building afforded a sweeping view of the Pacific Ocean, slopes of Mt. Tamalpais, southern Marin County and the entire San Francisco Bay Area.

The Inn was immediately put to use and gained a devoted list of guests, both hikers and railroad passengers. The railroad company leased the facility to a full-time innkeeper who ran it like a country hotel offering beds, hot meals, limited entertainment, and recreational opportunities. For more than a decade, the single, two-story Inn proved adequate to handle the visitors arriving by stage, train, and on foot or horseback. In the meantime, in 1908, the Muir Woods Inn was opened. Within a ten-year span, three inns had opened on Mt. Tamalpais.

The more elegant Tavern of Tamalpais and Muir Woods Inn tended to cater to the well-dressed visitor who enjoyed the views, fine food, and simple recreational pursuits, while the West Point Inn attracted more of the working people who sought accommodations at a key trail hub. An early visitor described the West Point Inn parlor as only adequate, with guest rooms small but great views to make up for the small interior space. Guests spent most of their time out on trails. Hunting parties sent supplies and materials by rail to the Inn, setting out on horseback for the day's hunt. Trophy antlers from those days continue to decorate the walls of the Inn.

As time passed, more demands were put on the West Point Inn and expansion would become necessary. Following the opening of the Inn in 1904 and creation of nearby Muir Woods National Monument in 1908, hiking clubs proliferated. The Tamalpais Conservation Club, founded in 1912, called the Inn its hiking headquarters. Others, like the Tourist Club (also founded in 1912), the California Alpine Club (1914), and clubs based in the East Bay, joined the older Tamalpais Club (pre-1880) and the Cross-Country Club (1890) in bringing people from all over the state to Mt. Tamalpais. The Sierra Club also made Mt. Tamalpais a focal point of its organized nature outings. Some of these clubs, notably the Tamalpais Conservation Club, were responsible for the construction of miles of popular trails in the mountain in use today. Virtually all of the clubs made some use of The West Point Inn, either formally or informally as members lodged or ate there as part of an outing.

Until the West Point Inn was built, and with the exception of the Tavern of Tamalpais, most private establishments offering lodging or board were located on the north side of the mountain, including the Summit House and Liberty Resort. On the south side, the new community of Mill Valley filled the needs of hikers and hunters. After the establishment of West Point Inn in 1904 a number of other hostelrys opened on the south slope, including the Muir Woods Inn (1908), Mountain Home Inn on Throckmorton Ridge above Mill Valley (1912) and the ornate chalet of the Tourist Club overlooking Muir Woods (circa 1920). Later, the California Alpine Club established a lodge in a former house on Throckmorton Ridge around 1928, and two attractions were available to hikers in Muir Woods, Joe's Place and the Muir Woods Inn.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property West Point Inn

County and State Marin County, California

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number 8

Page 3

Various events brought the need for expansion to the proprietors of the West Point Inn, but first there was a setback. The stage service to Willow Camp and Bolinas ended in 1915 and the Inn closed. By this time a handful of rustic cabins had been added to supplement the accommodations there. The Tamalpais Conservation Club took the lead in quickly returning the place into active operation and attracting a new innkeeper. Usually couples, the innkeepers acted as hosts, hotelkeepers, maintenance workers and cooks. The Inn reopened in 1916, no doubt boosted by the emerging popularity of the Mountain Play, founded in 1913 and continued as a tradition to this day.

The first Mountain Play was staged in a natural amphitheatre nestled on the western flanks of Mt. Tamalpais about two miles northwest of the West Point Inn. In May of 1913, Garnet Holme presented *Abraham and Isaac*, as well as scenes from *Twelfth Night*, to an audience of 1,200. The venue could only be reached by hikers, some of whom lodged at West Point Inn. The Mountain Play became an instant success. Holme created plays specifically for the spring event and had the help of the mountain's many outdoors organizations. The Mountain Play brought a new generation of hikers and visitors to Mt. Tamalpais. The play's director and actors stayed at Inn the week before the single annual show. Extra staff was hired for the busy week. Playgoers arrived by train, some making reservations for a fresh chicken dinner on the way home, made with chickens raised on the Inn grounds. The railway company constructed a new rail siding, laying 500-feet of new track down the Old Stage Road and building extensive passenger platforms to accommodate the larger crowds.

The increased interest in mountain pursuits and the accompanying demand for food and lodging brought new life to the West Point Inn. The railroad management enlarged the porch in 1916, creating a large, open-air gathering place that made the most of the Inn's expansive views. More sleeping cabins had been added in the 'teens and in 1918, Washington Dodge, a survivor of the sinking of the Titanic, built a cottage on the grounds. His was the most substantial of the West Point Inn cabins, with distinctive shingling, milled window frames, and fine interior wood paneling. In 1920, workers constructed an 800-square-foot dining room attached to the back of the Inn on a site that had been an open-air dance platform. The big room was nicely appointed and more than doubled the size of the common areas. It featured large windows, a brick fireplace, and wood paneling with wainscot. Henry Boese was the architect of the porch enlargement.

During early 1920s, innkeeper Martin Kliewe provided starched linen napkins and tablecloths, echoing the elegance of the Tavern of Tamalpais and Kliewe's experience at San Francisco's renowned Palace Hotel. Kliewe's Inn also had a radio at the dawn of radio broadcasting, built by the innkeeper himself. Live broadcasts from the best ballrooms in San Francisco played for Inn guests. A large bank of batteries in the basement powered the simple radio he used as a showpiece; he sold radios as a sideline for \$250 a piece. Kliewe, like other early innkeepers, had worked at fine hotels in San Francisco such as the Palace and St. Francis hotels.

An advertisement published in 1922 noted the attractions of the Inn: "West Point Inn, scenically located on Mt Tamalpais, OPEN ALL YEAR – If you have never spent a night at West Point there is a picturesque surprise in store for you. Sparkling lights of San Francisco and nearer towns; the Bay, shimmering under the full moon's brightness—then, with morning, the sun rising above the warm blanket of fog that has stolen in thru the night. Plan now to spend a night at West Point and enjoy these superlative scenes from this mountain height. Hotel and Outdoor Sleeping Accommodations, all recently renovated. Excellent Meals. Martin W. Kliewe [innkeeper]."

The West Point Inn thrived during the 1920s as the Mt. Tamalpais & Muir Woods Railway (as it was now called) continued hauling passengers up the mountain and to the increasingly popular Muir Woods National Monument. Mt. Tamalpais State Park was created in the late 1920s, its lands practically surrounding the area occupied by the West Point Inn. The Mountain Play brought crowds to post-play dinners, and the play's directors and actors lodged at the inn during the rehearsal periods before the annual performances. Surrounding communities in and outside of Marin County sprouted with commuter-oriented suburbs served by modern interurban electric train service. These new neighborhoods attracted people who enjoyed the outdoors and the scenery of Marin County.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property West Point Inn

County and State Marin County, California

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number 8

Page 4

A building boom in Marin County and the resulting need for increased domestic water supply led to the creation in 1912 of the Marin Municipal Water District. The new district took over the lands of the North Coast Water Company, which controlled the south slopes of Mt. Tamalpais. The West Point Inn became the property of the water district, which leased the grounds back to the railroad company.

Despite occasional efforts to close the mountain railroad and replace it with a paved automobile roadway, the trains continued to run until 1929 when a devastating fire roared over the south side of Mt. Tamalpais, burning hundreds of homes in Mill Valley and damaging the railroad infrastructure. The West Point Inn survived the fire, but the Mt. Tamalpais & Muir Woods Railway went out of business, tearing up the rails and ties and leaving a well-engineered dirt roadway for future use as a hiking trail.

The closure of the railroad and the subsequent Great Depression initially slowed activities at the Inn. Despite the economic hardships (or perhaps because of them), hiking continued to flourish on Mt. Tamalpais and the Inn remained open. Thousands came to Mt. Tamalpais every weekend using the frequent and inexpensive train and ferries of the Northwestern Pacific Railroad (round trip 48¢.) It was said the throngs of hikers that streamed from the trains sounded like an army marching through Mill Valley. The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) accomplished many projects on Mt. Tamalpais, including the Sidney B. Cushing Amphitheater on the location of the Mountain Play, recreational and environmental enhancements in Muir Woods National Monument and Mt. Tamalpais State Park, and road building in the area. The CCC performed some work at West Point Inn, as evidenced in a plan map of the West Point Inn dated 1937. The plan indicated water system improvements, fire breaks, and retaining wall work. The Works Progress Administration (WPA) apparently also worked at the Inn: in 1980 workers found a note in a wall stating, "Old Men's Men's Bathroom: WPA Project # 50-12069."

The CCC map presents the best accurate depiction of structures and landscape existing in 1937, and is notable for illustrating how few changes have been made at the Inn grounds since that time. The map labeled key vegetation on site, including manzanita, bay, live oak, and wax myrtle. The main Inn building, with porches and entry stairs of wood and masonry, is accurately depicted as well as the chicken shed and five guest cabins, all of which are extant today. The only building noted that has been removed is a small shed used for producing and storing acetylene at the south corner of the Inn at the railroad grade. The map shows the original alignment of the trail to the cabins, a section of which has been covered by a disabled person's access ramp and deck.

The West Point Inn operated as a commercial hostelry throughout the 1930s despite the closing of the railroad. Its prices remained reasonable: in 1942 the overnight rate, including dinner and breakfast, was \$2.75. During the wartime Army occupation of Mt. Tamalpais, an unknown number of soldiers lived at West Point Inn and many relaxed there during off duty hours. The war, however, caused the closing of the Inn in 1943, as the nation's energy was focused elsewhere. Immediately, outraged members of the Sierra Club negotiated a lease from the Marin Municipal Water District and reopened the Inn, on reduced hours. Succeeding the Sierra Club, the newly formed West Point Club purchased the furnishings and equipment and leased the grounds for one dollar a year. Members paid \$5 for membership, \$2 per year, and \$1 per night for a room. By 1950, the Inn once again was open all year.

The postwar period in California saw sudden suburban growth and an increase in the population of the San Francisco Bay Area. As in the early part of the century, new residents were attracted to the area, especially Marin County, by the scenic attractions and recreational opportunities. Hiking again became popular and as time went by, running and mountain bikers joined the users of Mt. Tamalpais, which attracted people from all over California. The West Point Inn remained open during this period, but began to appear dilapidated by the 1970s with little maintenance accomplished on the then-70-year-old building. It was also considered to be overly exclusive, which led to the formation of a new controlling organization.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property West Point Inn

County and State Marin County, California

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)  
\_\_\_\_\_

Section number 8

Page 5

With renovations that would save the Inn in mind, members formed the non-profit West Point Inn Association in 1978 and commenced a number of restoration and rebuilding projects. During the 1980s the porch was rebuilt, oak floors installed in the common rooms, and Cabin 1 was rehabilitated and made accessible to people with disabilities in the 1990s. The major project of that decade was the construction of a split-level innkeepers quarters as an addition on the north side of the old members lounge. The architect took pains to retain the basic style of the Inn while providing modern amenities.

During the 1990s, members improved the septic system, added a foundation on the 1918 Honeymoon Cabin, shingled other cabins and strengthened their underpinnings, and restored the windows in the members lounge. To comply with accessibility laws, an extensive wood ramp was constructed between the main Inn building and Cabin 1. In recent years the kitchen has been upgraded, safety features installed, and hazard trees removed. The Inn continues to offer rustic lodging, shelter, refreshments to passing hikers, indirect support to the Mountain Play and other activities on Mt. Tamalpais, and monthly summer pancake breakfasts.

### *Conclusion*

The West Point Inn is one of only two surviving early mountain inns on Mt. Tamalpais. The Muir Woods Inn burned in 1913 and its replacement no longer stands. The Tavern of Tamalpais was destroyed in a 1923 fire and its replacement was eventually removed. The Mountain Home Inn was rebuilt in the 1980s with a more upscale establishment. Only the ornate and private Tourist Club remains, now surrounded by suburban development but still offering its fine view of Muir Woods. The West Point Inn reflects its past as a Western outpost that thrived during the days of stage coaches, railroads, and hardy outdoors-loving men and women who thought nothing of climbing steep mountain trails in search of respite from the rigors of their city lives.

The West Point Inn is the last of its kind and has endured through numerous challenges offering, almost uninterrupted for more than 104 years, rustic accommodations to hikers, horsemen, and other visitors. Owned by the Marin Municipal Water District and operated by a volunteer board as the West Point Inn Association, the Inn continues to welcome hikers and visitors, providing a rest stop with an unforgettable view, offering refreshments and helpful information, emergency services, and simple overnight accommodations. Historic preservation efforts have kept the old Inn buildings true to their roots. Propane gaslights still provide for overnight guests, as no electrical service is available except for an emergency generator. Minimal modernization has occurred, including a revamped kitchen and facilities for access to people with disabilities.

The West Point Inn is a relic of the times when stagecoaches and trains brought hikers and sightseers from around the globe to the famous Mt. Tamalpais with its stunning views of San Francisco and environs. It is a unique and increasingly rare surviving mountain lodge that played a part in the development of recreation in the San Francisco Bay Area, and a well-preserved example of the architecture of the era.

West Point Inn  
Name of Property

Marin County, California  
County and State

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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

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- Sandrock, Fred, Editor. *Facts & Fancies*. Newsletter of the Mt. Tamalpais History Project.
- Spitz, Barry. *Mill Valley: A History*. San Anselmo: Potrero Meadow Publishing, 1998.
- Toogood, Anna Coxe. *Historic Resource Study: A Civil History of Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Point Reyes National Seashore California*. Denver: National Park Service, [1980].
- Wurm, Ted and Al Graves. *The Crookedest Railroad in the World*. Glendale: Trans-Anglo Books, 1983.

Historical Files, West Point Inn, Fred Runner, Historian.

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: West Point Inn, Mill Valley Library

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreeage of Property** Approximately 1 acre  
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	<u>10</u>	<u>535715</u>	<u>196695</u>	3	<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>	4	<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

**Verbal Boundary Description** (describe the boundaries of the property)

The West Point Inn Historic District comprises the grounds of the West Point Inn on Mt. Tamalpais, California, as designated in the West Point Inn Association's lease agreement with Marin Municipal Water District. The boundary is the inner edge of Old Railroad Grade, a public trail, as it encircles the Inn grounds, and a straight line running between the two portions of the railroad grade (see sketch map) a short distance north of Cabin #4.

**Boundary Justification** (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The boundary includes the entire working and historic grounds of the West Point Inn, an area that has changed little since the historic period.



West Point Inn  
Name of Property

Marin County, California  
County and State

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title D. S. (Dewey) Livingston, Historian  
organization West Point Inn Association date August 1, 2009  
street & number PO Box 296 telephone 415-669-7706  
city or town Inverness state CA zip code 94937  
e-mail dlive@svn.net

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Photographs:**

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

*[See continuation sheets]*

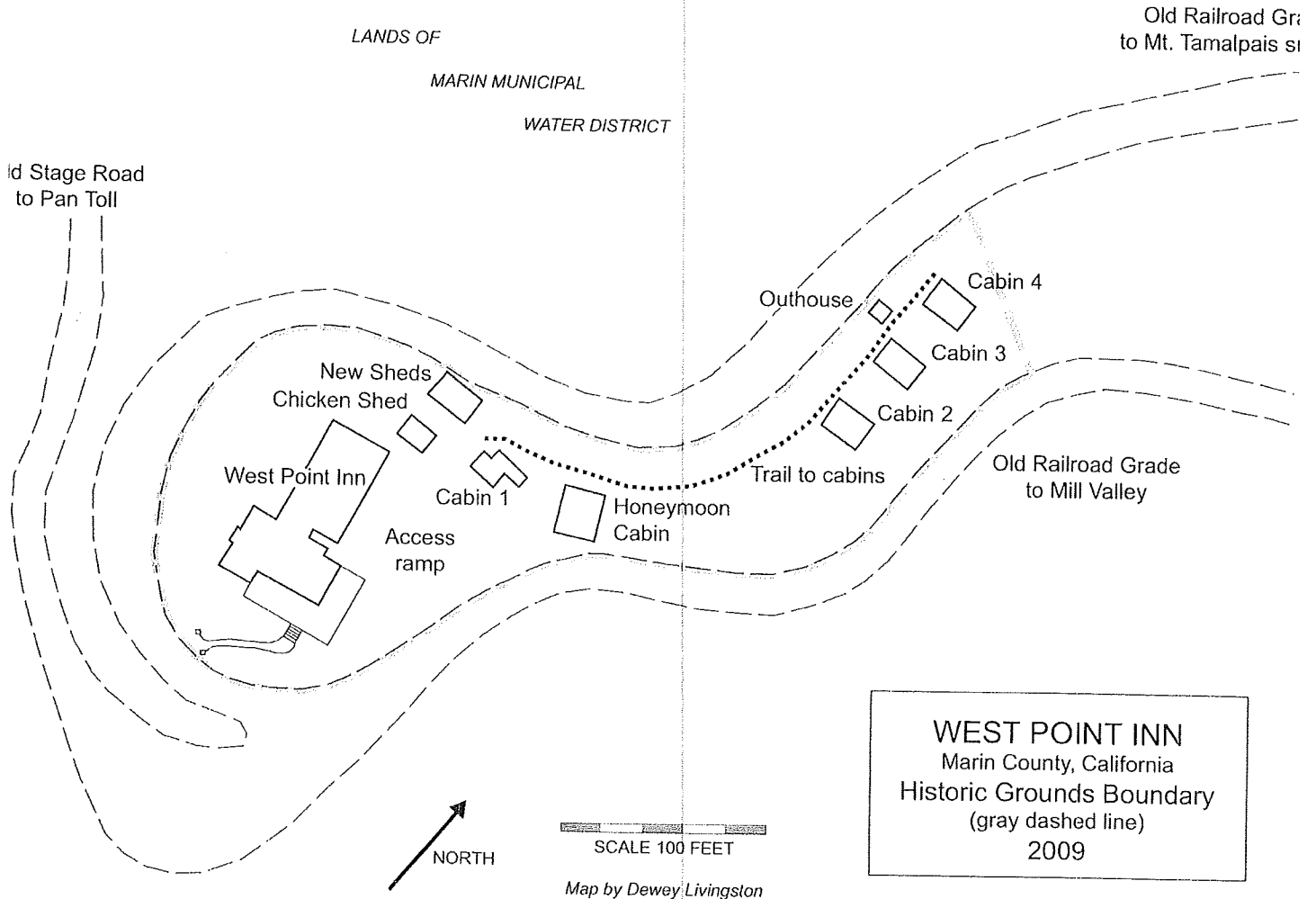
**Property Owner:**

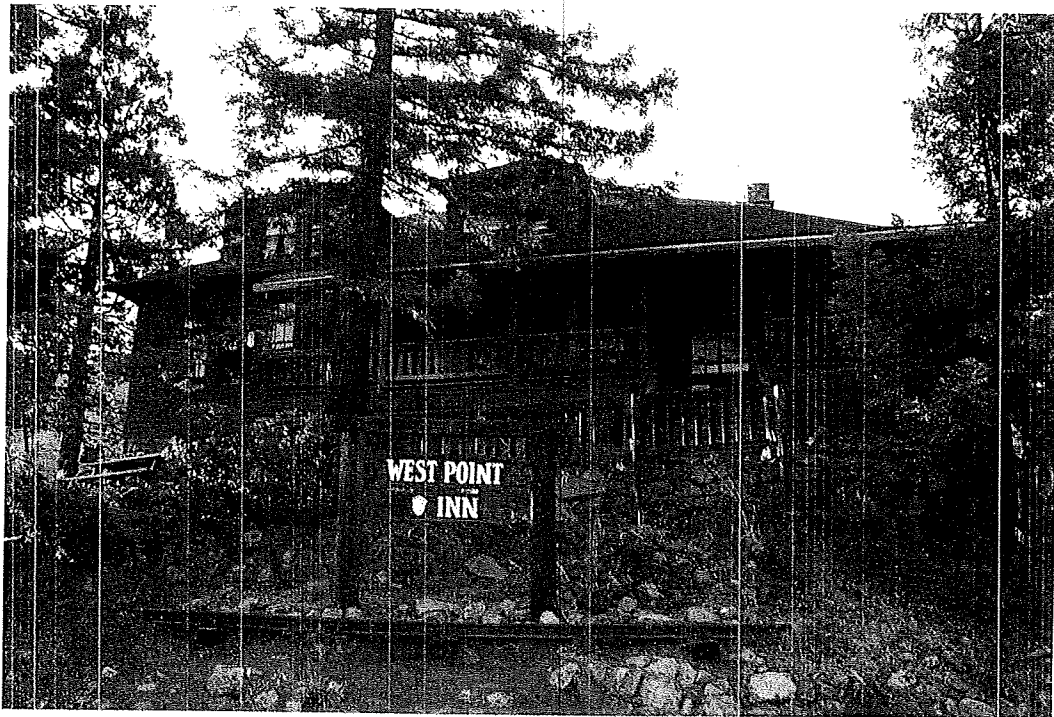
(complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

name Marin Municipal Water District  
street & number 220 Nellen Avenue telephone 415-945-1190  
city or town Corte Madera state CA zip code 94925

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

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





Photograph #1

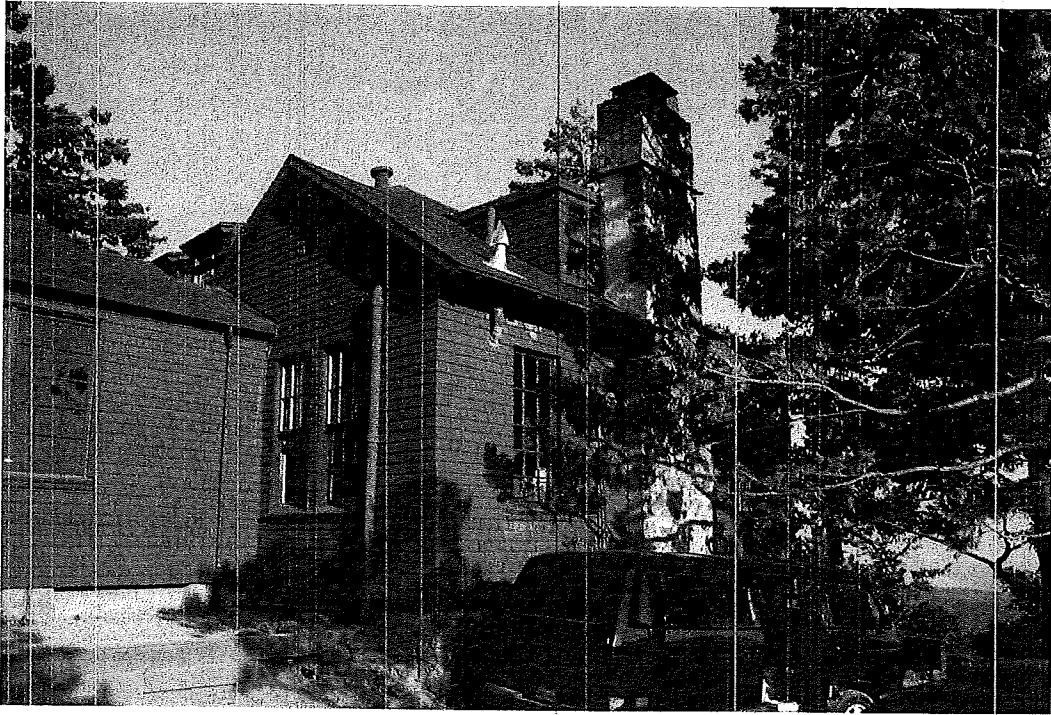
West Point Inn, Marin County, California

View of West Point Inn

View to northeast

Photographer: D. S. (Dewey) Livingston

August 13, 2008



Photograph #2

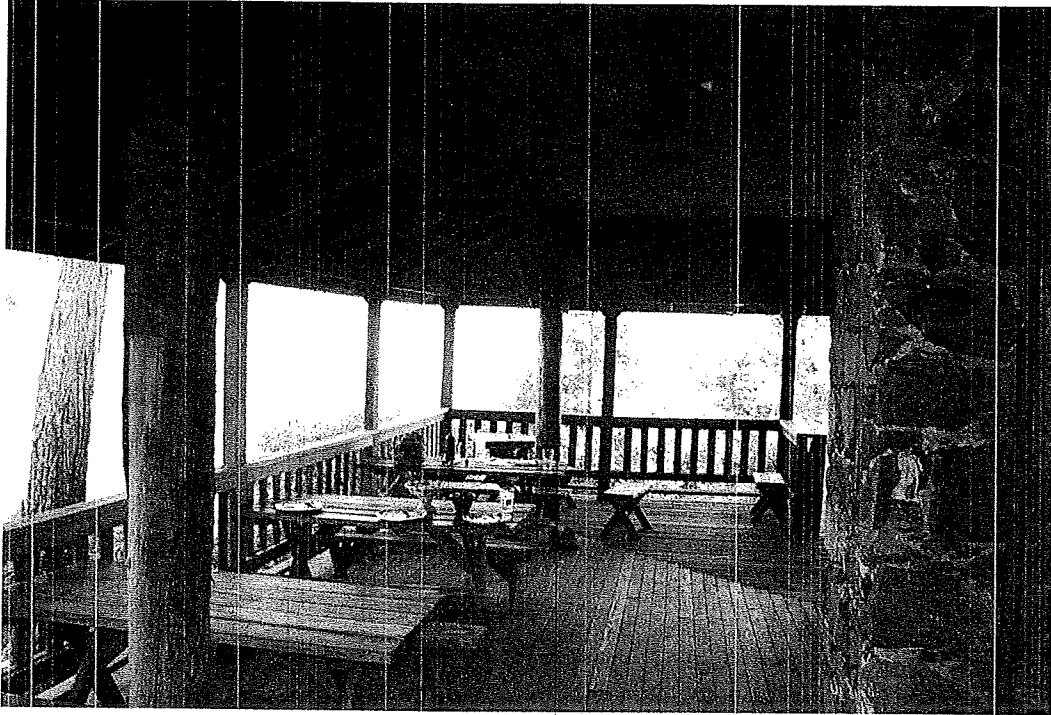
West Point Inn, Marin County, California

View of rear of Inn

View to south

Photographer: D. S. (Dewey) Livingston

August 13, 2008



Photograph #3

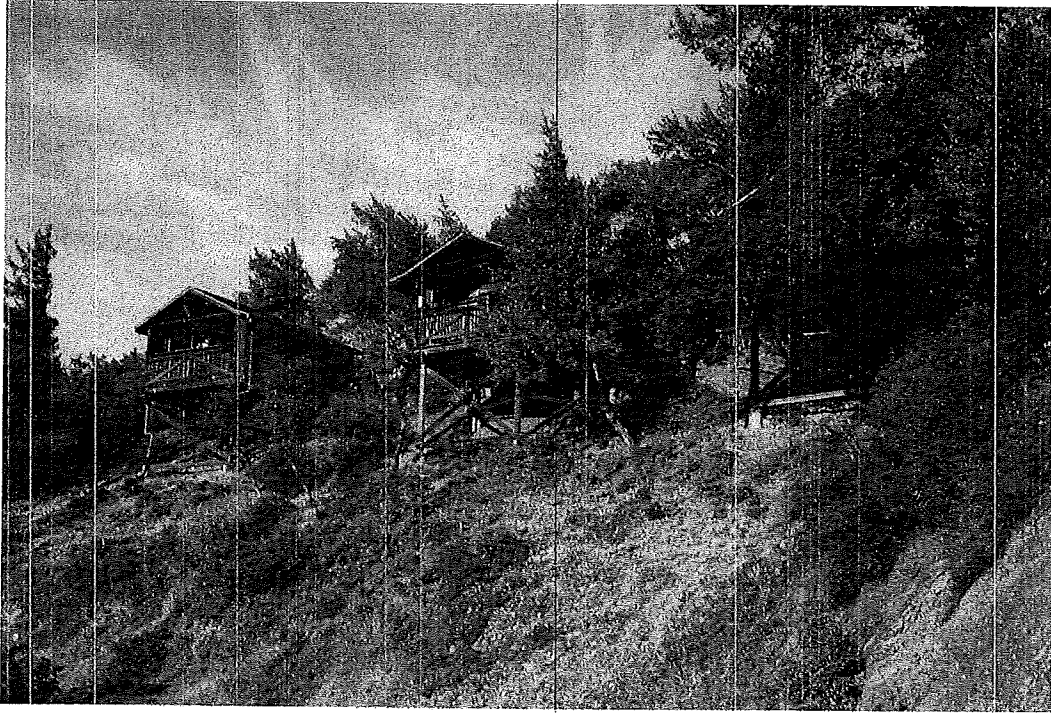
West Point Inn, Marin County, California

View of main porch

View to west

Photographer: D. S. (Dewey) Livingston

August 13, 2008



Photograph #4

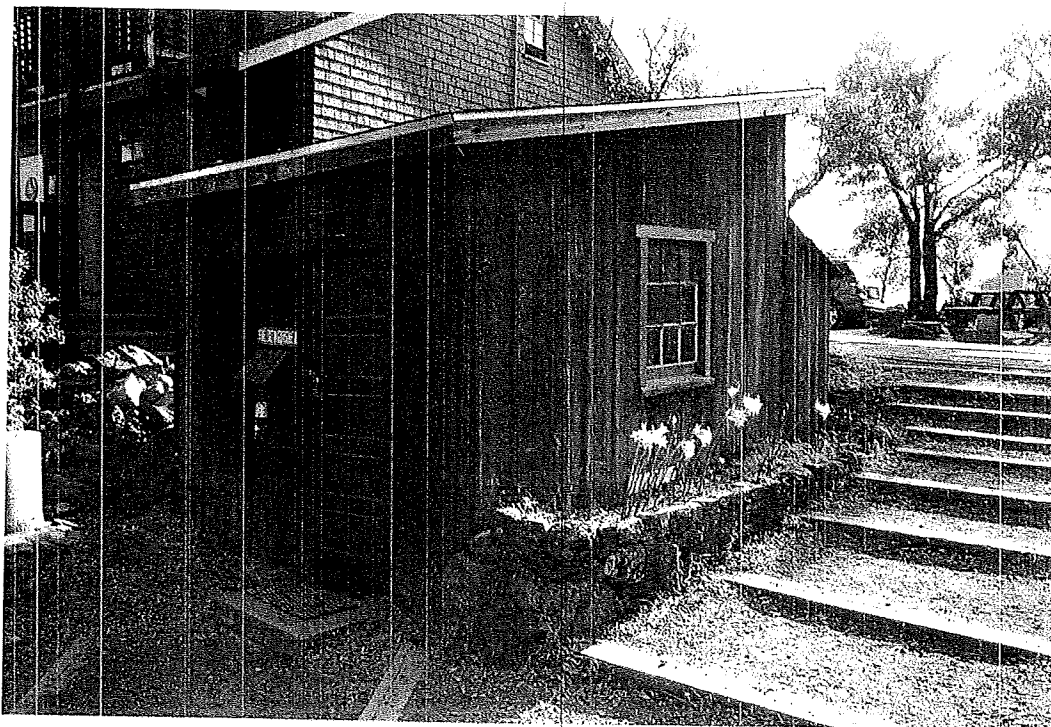
West Point Inn, Marin County, California

View of Cabins # 2, 3 & 4

View to northwest

Photographer: D. S. (Dewey) Livingston

August 13, 2008



Photograph #5

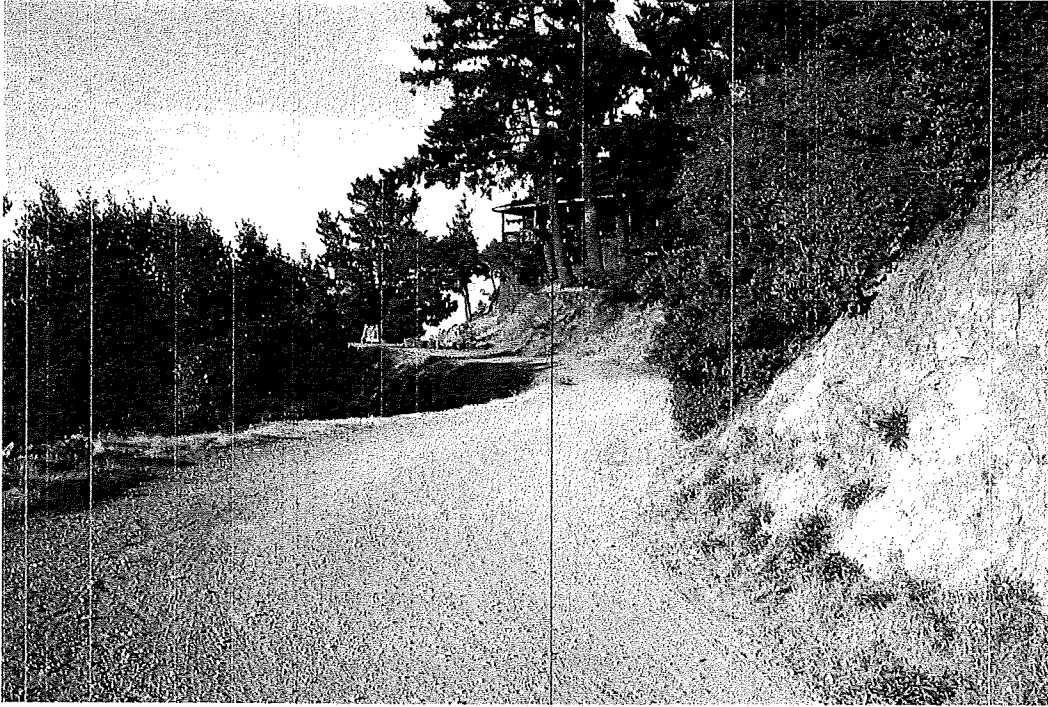
West Point Inn, Marin County, California

View of Chicken Shed

View to northwest

Photographer: D. S. (Dewey) Livingston

August 13, 2008



Photograph #6

West Point Inn, Marin County, California

View of Old Railroad Grade

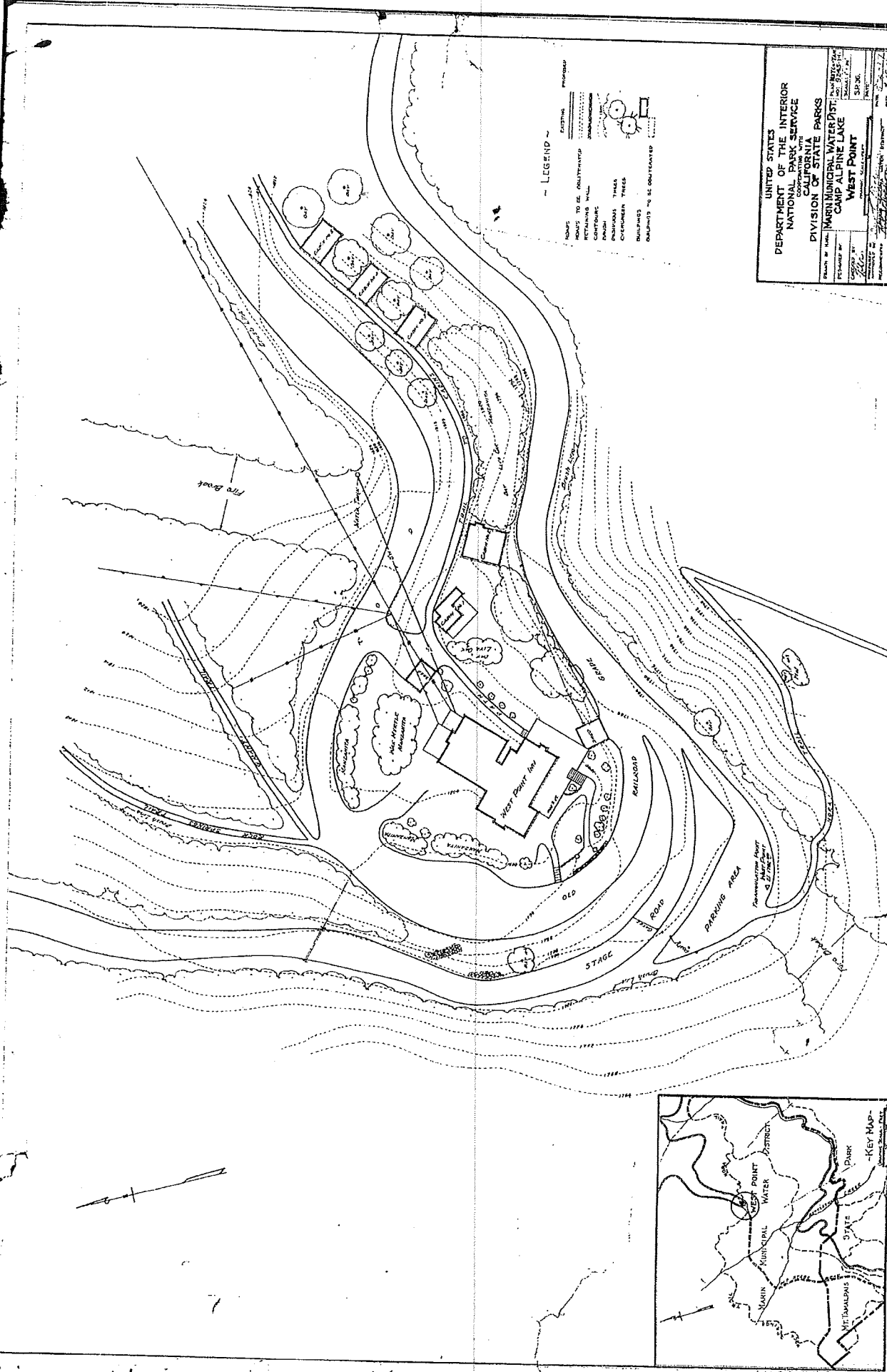
View to west

Photographer: D. S. (Dewey) Livingston

August 13, 2008



1937 Map of Inn without Existing Accessible Ramp



# Toby Accessible Cabin

