

Teton County Historic Site Survey

1. Name of Property

historic name Hatchet Motel

other name/site number Hatchet Resort

2. Location

street & number 19980 E. U.S Hwy 287 ☐ not for publication

city or town Moran ☒ vicinity

state Wyoming code WY county Teton code 039 zip code 83013

3. Ownership of Property

(check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

4. Category of Property

(check only one box)

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

5. Number of Resources within Property

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>	buildings
		sites
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	structures
		objects
<u>4</u>	<u>6</u>	Total

Property Owner

name/title Moran Mountain Resorts, LLC

street & number 19980 E Highway 287 telephone

city or town Moran state WY zip code 83013

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

National Register Status:

- ☒ Eligible ☐ Unevaluated
☐ Not Eligible ☐ District Potential

6. Function or Use

Historic Function

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: Hotel

Current Function

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: Hotel

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: Commercial log vernacular

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	concrete
walls	log
roof	wood/shake
other	

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

☒ See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 7

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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Areas of Significance

Commerce

Architecture

Period of Significance

1954-1955

1954

Significant Dates**Significant Persons**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation**Architect/Builder**

☒ See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 8

9. Major Bibliographical References**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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:

Jackson Hole Historical Society

☒ See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 9

10. Geographical Data**Acreage of Property** about 7 acres**UTM References**

(Place additional boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

1 1/2 5/5/1/5/7/7 4/8/5/2/6/1/2
Zone Easting Northing2 1/2 / / / / / / / / / /
Zone Easting Northing3 1/2 / / / / / / / / / /
Zone Easting Northing4 1/2 / / / / / / / / / /
Zone Easting Northing**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

☒ See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 10**11. Form Prepared By**

Michael Cassity, Ph.D.
Historical Research and Photography
304 W. Albuquerque
Broken Arrow, Oklahoma 74011
Phone: 918 451-8378 • Fax: 918 451-8379
mcassity@valornet.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Maps**
- **Photographs:** Representative photographs of the property.

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Hatchet Motel

Narrative Description

The Hatchet Motel, now known as the Hatchet Resort, is located immediately south of U.S. Highway 26 / 287 about seven miles east of Moran Junction as the highway stretches between Moran Junction and Dubois. Situated in the Buffalo Valley, the terrain is open to the west, providing spectacular vistas of Mount Moran in particular and to the east the terrain rises as the highway approaches Togwotee Pass. The motel includes a service station and store and a restaurant facing north to the highway with an A-frame lodging house (the Osprey) in the same line. Behind, to the south, of these buildings a row of trees provides protection from the highway for a continuous row of lodging units. The original buildings are constructed of log while the newer buildings use wood plank siding; all have gabled roofs, some in a steeply pitched chalet style.

The restaurant, constructed in 1954, is a tall, two-story, building made of log on the first floor and board and batten in the gables above. The log coping is performed in an elaborate method using long crowns of uneven lengths and irregular axe finishing to provide a rustic appearance. The north elevation includes most prominently a huge neon-illuminated hatchet sign with the name Hatchet on the blade and Grill vertically on the handle. On the ground level the doorway is located at the east end and three large horizontal fixed light windows stretch from there to the west. On the east elevation, the sloping roof is interrupted by a pair of gabled dormers; the roof eaves reach beyond the edge of the building and provide protection for a flower planter below the horizontal windows. The west elevation echoes the east.

The service station and store is immediately east of the restaurant and is a contributing feature. This building is similar to the restaurant, except its roof is on an east-west axis instead of north-south. It has three gabled dormers in the front—north—slope and none on the south slope which extends on the east end all the way to the ground. Directly to the north of the station/store is the gasoline pumping area with two islands of pumps covered by an open gabled-roof canopy (noncontributing) made of logs. East of the station/store is a small log building that serves as the motel office. The gabled-roof eaves in front and in back both extend beyond the building so as to provide a canopy for the porch. Farther east in the same line of buildings is the recently added lodging building, an A-frame two-story building known as the osprey (noncontributing).

South of this line of buildings lie two more buildings recently added. One is a log structure directly behind the restaurant. This is the Lodge/Whetstone Pizzeria complex. With two log buildings joined with a middle section, the two ridges are parallel and a third gabled roof connects them on the west. In both the front and the rear the building has porches that are covered by gently sloping extensions of the roof. It is, in turn, connected with yet another building to the southwest by a gabled roof. A gazebo (noncontributing) is immediately east of this building.

South of the common buildings a continuous row of lodging units extends along a line not quite parallel to the highway, with the east end closer to the road than the west, and the row actually cants forward with the last three units at both ends. The units on the east are the older, original, units and

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Hatchet Motel

make this a contributing building, as indicated by the irregular log crowns and coping consistent with the restaurant. Regularly spaced log columns support the overhanging eaves that cover the walkway in front of the units. This building is separated slightly from the adjacent, and more recent building that continues the line of units. The date of construction of this building is not known. Despite its more recent construction it continues the original appearance of the motel in its design and materials.

At the west entrance to the property, near the highway, a sign indicating HATCHET MOTEL in the shape of a hatchet with an attached panel with neon lettering is mounted on a steel pole. Although the sign has been re-set and possibly remounted, it is a contributing structure.

Contributing buildings

- Restaurant
- Service station/store
- East section of lodging units

Noncontributing buildings

- Motel office
- Osprey lodging house
- Lodge / pizzeria complex
- West section of lodging units
- Unknown building west of restaurant

Contributing structure

- Sign at west entrance

Noncontributing structure

- Gabled canopy over gas pump islands

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Hatchet Motel



Hatchet Motel, Restaurant / Grill, looking southwest. Photo: Michael Cassity, 2004.

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Hatchet Motel



Hatchet Motel. From left, Osprey Lodging House, Motel office, Gasoline station and pumps with canopy (in front), and restaurant / grill. Sign is at far right. Photo: Michael Cassity, 2004.

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Hatchet Motel



Hatchet Motel. Lodging units, east section, looking south. Photo: Michael Cassity, 2004.

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Hatchet Motel



Hatchet Motel. West Lodging Units, looking southwest. Photo: Michael Cassity, 2004.

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Hatchet Motel



Hatchet Motel. Sign, looking northwest. Photo: Michael Cassity, 2004.

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Hatchet Motel

Narrative Statement of Significance

The Hatchet Motel is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its historic significance and under Criterion C for its architectural features.

Its significance under Criterion A derives from the role this establishment played in the transformation of Jackson Hole from a ranching economy to a tourist economy and social structure. Indeed, the location of this business is near the site of some of the earliest settlement activity in the valley. As one group of settlers took up land near South Park and the future town of Jackson, another group made their claims at the north end of the valley, in the vicinity of the Buffalo Valley. The Hatchet Ranch was one of the most prominent of the ranches that emerged in the north. On the fringes of the dude ranching and hobby ranching that began to replace the local cattle ranches, it was only after World War II that the tourist economy hit this area in a large way. The cluster of buildings that became known as Hatchet Motel represented the main focus of that tourist activity in the Buffalo Valley outside Grand Teton National Monument and Park. Access to the valley from the east, via Togwotee Pass, was never easy and while a military road followed the Indian trails over the pass, it was only in the 1920s that the road was improved with gravel, and even so on the eve of World War II the WPA guide book referred to the road at the top as "a narrow, winding avenue between dense pine and spruce." After World War II the road was paved and this became a prominent avenue by which people could access Jackson Hole. By 1950 or 1951 one, and possibly two, filling stations were located along the road, thus providing an important service to the travelers and serving as a vanguard of future development.

The major breakthrough, however, came in 1953. That year William B. Campbell signed an agreement with Shirley M. Daniel (his daughter) by which Daniel agreed to build the operation that would become known as the Hatchet Motel. Daniel agreed to begin construction in the spring of 1954 "not less than twenty (20) tourist cabins, of log construction, each of which shall be not less than 14 feet by 18 feet in dimension and to include all plumbing and exterior finish, ready for occupancy; and . . . build one Café building, not less than 32 feet by 32 feet in dimension, ready for use as a Café, and to build one store building, not less than 26 feet by 44 feet in dimensions, ready for use as a store" The record is unclear whether there was already a filling station at the site, but a Sinclair station was soon added, possibly replacing a postwar station nearby.

Opening in 1954, the motel has a brief period of historic significance, although that will increase as years pass and the fifty-year threshold for National Register eligibility shifts forward. Its significance, however, does not rest on how it operated but that it came into being at the time that it did, for it added another element of the commercial infrastructure serving the motorist tourists who were pouring into Jackson Hole in the years after World War II and transforming the economy and society as they did so. One of the axioms of the tourist traffic and highway construction is that the easier it is for travelers to follow a certain route, the greater the pressure there is to improve the roadway and increase the business along that route, and conversely, the more improvements there are on a

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Hatchet Motel

certain route, the greater the volume of traffic that will emerge there. Indeed, that axiom carries with it an important germ of the process at work in the modern history of Jackson Hole.

The Hatchet Motel is also significant under Criterion C because it represents a distinct phase in the evolution of the lodging industry that served that burgeoning tourist traffic. While the agreement called for the construction of twenty "tourist cabins" that term was in the process of being redefined and the more modern approach, even when the "cabins" were made of log, was to integrate the separate cottages into a single linear structure under one roof. Usually known as a motor court, this was the precursor to the modern motel. Often the motor courts would be arranged in a U or a V in the years right after World War II, but by the middle of the 1950s the trend was to construct the units in a single line. The slight canting of these units at the east provides a slight gesture in the direction of tradition although the lodging otherwise remained in a single line under one roof. The use of logs to make the units rustic also marks them as early pioneers in the lodging industry, at least in this part of Teton County. In Jackson, the lodging businesses were moving away from logs and rustic appearances in favor of modern, conventional urban dwellings.

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Hatchet Motel

Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

This property consists of lot 2 Hatchet Subdivision and parts of SE $\frac{1}{4}$, NE $\frac{1}{4}$, Section 36, T45,R 113.

Boundary Justification

This boundary includes the property historically associated with the Hatchet Motel.