April 1, 2015

Herb Sargo
Buckner Homestead Heritage Foundation
P.O. Box 184
Manson, WA 98831

Dear Mr. Sargo:

North Cascades National Park Service Complex (NOCA) proposes to begin the second phase of rehabilitating the Buckner Homestead Historic District main residence (Figure 1). This letter serves to describe the Area of Potential Effect, Assessment of Effect, and to ask for comment from interested parties for this upcoming project.

The historic Buckner main residence is situated within the Buckner Homestead Historic District and Cultural Landscape, located in the lower Stehekin Valley in Lake Chelan National Recreation Area. This unique historic district is listed on the National Register as an outstanding example of early settlement and pioneer farming in the remote Stehekin Valley (1889 - WWII). Managed by the NPS as an interpretive site, the district is a prime visitor attraction. The Buckner main residence has provided NPS employee housing for more than four decades but is now unoccupied and in need of continued preservation maintenance and rehabilitation.

Project Review and Proposal
In 2014 the NOCA Preservation Crew successfully lifted the house into level position and retrofit a reinforced concrete footer and foundation under the most displaced south and west additions. This year's project proposes to complete the foundation work under the house including areas under the kitchen, the south room’s east wall, and the north cabin section all of which have already been reviewed by the Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) with a determination of No Adverse Effect. However, it was discovered during the previous field season that in order to access the foundation along the kitchen’s south wall and the south addition’s east wall, the laundry room, a recent addition, needs to be removed. It has been determined that this is the only way to gain physical access to the foundation of two weight-bearing walls that are no longer supported due to the house lifting and leveling. The Area of Potential Effect (APE) for this project encompasses the perimeter of the Buckner house as well as a 5 meter buffer surrounding the area needed to stabilize and gain access to the foundation (Figure 2).

While originally the laundry room removal was meant to be temporary, further research has led us to the decision to make it permanent. During the investigation of the laundry room addition, it was discovered that the roof framing was built on top, and changed the shape of, the former historic east gable roof (Figures 3 and 4). Additionally it was found that the plywood roof sheathing in the addition is in poor condition due to years of inadequate attic ventilation causing mold to be prevalent. Presently the laundry room addition creates a saltbox roof shape with the
historic symmetrical east gable roof still mostly intact but hidden underneath. With the removal of the laundry room, we propose to restore the original east gable of the Buckner main residence to its period of significance.

Although the current shed roof kitchen porch was constructed in the 1970s, a porch was an important outdoor extension of the kitchen during its period of significance. Unfortunately, a historic photograph has not been found that demonstrates the correct design of the porch roof during that period. It is suspect that it was a hipped porch roof but research is on-going. The shed roof porch will be shortened to match the reconstructed kitchen width and replaced in-kind unless definitive photographic evidence is found showing otherwise.

Once the addition is removed, board and batten siding consistent with the existing will be placed on the reconstructed exterior. One window along the restored south addition’s east wall will be reconstructed to match the three existing four-light wood casement windows along the south and west bedroom walls (Figure 5). This is consistent with the floor plan that the Buckner sisters drew of the house in their memoir (Figure 6) (Morehead et al 2007).

Along the north side of the original cabin, two picture windows replaced the original windows at the main entrance at an unknown date. The windows significantly alter the original appearance of the house along the most visually prominent sides that visitors see when touring the Buckner Homestead Historic District (Figure 7). Numerous historic photographs of this side of the house exist from the period of significance. These pictures show that the west side of the front entrance formerly had three 8-light wood windows within a single rough opening and the east side had two 8-light wood windows in a rough window opening (Figures 8 and 9). Examples of these exact windows are still in place along the west and east sides of the original cabin (Figure 10). Using the existing examples, we propose to reconstruct five 8-light wood windows to replace the picture windows.

Cultural Resource Surveys and Determination of Effect
The Buckner main residence is centrally located within a cultural landscape which was first recorded in 1985. An updated Cultural Landscape Inventory is set for completion in 2015. A specialist from the NPS regional office in San Francisco has reviewed the project and found that no contributing elements to the landscape will be altered. It has been determined that this project will result in a No Adverse Effect to the landscape.

The Buckner main residence is one of several structures listed on the National Register as contributing to the historic district. The second phase of this project proposes to reconstruct 6 windows and to rehabilitate the gable roof on the east (kitchen) addition both to the period of significance. This project has been reviewed by a specialist in the Seattle regional office and it has been determined that these actions will result in a No Adverse Effect to the historic structure and district.

NOCA is committed to maintaining the Buckner residence as a two bedroom house so that in the future an employee and their family can live there once again. Although we plan to remove the laundry room, there remains ample space throughout the homestead to relocate the laundry room functions. Laundry activities including a stackable washer/dryer can be relocated to the bathroom. A new location for a chest freezer is being explored including potentially adding electricity to the playhouse and locating the freezer there. Current foundation work in the cellar is being completed to preserve the option of creating a conditioned space for additional storage or to potentially relocate the laundry and chest freezer.
We take this opportunity to invite your comment on the Assessment of Effect, as well as any specific concerns you may have regarding our upcoming plans in the Buckner Homestead Historic District.

If you have further questions please contact Kim Kwarsick, Cultural Resource Program Manager at (360) 854-7341.

Sincerely,

Karen Taylor-Goodrich
Superintendent

Enclosures

CC
Nicholas Vann, DAHP
Citations

Morehead, Irene; Harriet Gans, and Elizabeth Sargo
2007  *The Stehekin We Remember*. Self-published by the Buckner Sisters.
Figure 1. Buckner Homestead Historic District vicinity map with landscape and archeological sites located.
Figure 2. Area of Potential Effect.
Figure 3. East kitchen addition attic showing historic gable under laundry room addition.

Figure 4. East kitchen addition at time of laundry room addition circa 1975.
Figure 5. Existing four-light casement wood window along the south wall of the south addition proposed for reconstruction.

Figure 6. Floor plan included in the Buckner sisters’ memoir showing the window on the east side of the south addition.
Figure 7. North side of original cabin showing the existing picture windows.

Figure 8. North side of original cabin circa 1940 showing 8-light windows.
Figure 9. North side of original cabin circa 1932 (looking southwest) showing 8-light windows.

Figure 10. Existing 8-light wood windows on west side of living room that will be used as templates for reconstruction.