

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**
FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Big Bend Historical Area (Shenango River Lake)

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

Located on the left bank of the Shenango River, 6 miles northwest of Mercer, Pennsylvania, via Pennsylvania State Route 258 and T-577

STREET & NUMBER

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

VICINITY OF

24th

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Pennsylvania

42

Mercer

085

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE Government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS (If applicable) U. S. Government - Under jurisdiction of:
U. S. Army Engineer District, Pittsburgh, Corps of Engineers

STREET & NUMBER

Federal Building, 1000 Liberty Ave.

CITY, TOWN

Pittsburgh

STATE

Pennsylvania 15222

VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Mercer County Courthouse or

STREET & NUMBER

above address (Block 4)

CITY, TOWN

Mercer

STATE

Pennsylvania 16137

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TRUE

No survey of this site has ever been made according to the State

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR

SURVEY RECORDS Historic Preservation Officer

CITY, TOWN

STATE

DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Big Bend Historical Area, which comprises three areas totalling 209 acres, is located at a sharp right angle bend of the Shenango River marking the site of the early 19th Century Village of Big Bend. All sites of historical significance in the general area were in ruins prior to initiation of construction of the Shenango River Lake project in May 1963 by the Corps of Engineers, Pittsburgh District.

Visible in an area consisting of 133 acres is the site of an old iron furnace and the remains of the Shenango Division (Erie Extension Canal) canal towpath, canal loading bay and the road which was used for hauling raw materials from the canal to the furnace. Near the furnace site is the site of the Shenango House Hotel built during the canal era (about 1830). At an area west of Big Bend, consisting of 51 acres, are the visible remains of Dam No. 2, a lock and the lockkeeper's house. Also, at an area north of Big Bend, consisting of 25 acres, are the visible remains of a lock and lockkeeper's house.

On the right bank of the river, in the area of the big bend, was the residential area of the Village of Big Bend; however, there are no visible remains of any of the buildings. It is believed that the town was abandoned prior to the 1940's.

Presently, no major program of development is planned for the area by the Corps of Engineers; however, a system of trails with interpretive signs to identify the above features could be adapted. The trail system would be connected to the Shenango Trail which follows the canal towpath extending over the entire length of the reservoir. Parking would also be provided and the inclusion of a small picnicking facility for sightseers would be considered.

The three (3) areas comprising the Big Bend Historical Area are delineated on the accompanying U.S.G.S. map (Fredonia Quadrangle) and also a hand-drawn sketch.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

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

SPECIFIC DATES **1830 - 1860 A.D.**

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Village of Big Bend, once known as "Shenango" but never incorporated under that name, was one of the most industrialized towns which sprung up along the Shenango Division of the Erie Extension Canal in Mercer County, Pennsylvania. The big bend of the Shenango River was the location of one of the pioneer iron works in the United States. The Big Bend Iron Furnace was founded in 1846 by McFarland and King. On 1 April 1850, they erected a foundry in connection with the blast furnace and announced that they were "ready to fill all orders from a needle to an anchor". The company exchanged castings for wheat, rye, corn, oats, bacon and other agriculture products. All of their shipping was done via the canal. With the advent of mineral coal, operation of the furnace was no longer a remunerative business and, as a result, it was abandoned in 1860.

As late as 1830, a band of Seneca Indians lived near Big Bend and the townspeople were still wearing buckskin moccasins.

With the canal and loading wharf in the Village of Big Bend, it became an important shipping point for all charcoal furnaces in the central part of Mercer County. The natural resources of the early settlement included iron ore and a number of gas wells. The presence of iron ore in the area influenced McFarland and King to build the iron furnace and a stove foundry. In the early 1850's most of the Town's inhabitants worked either in the stove foundry or at the iron furnace, or at jobs primarily associated with the canal.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Hiking with History along the Erie Extension Canal - Fred J. Brenner, Ph. D. (1967) Pages 13 and 14.

History of Mercer County - Published by Brown, Runk & Company in 1888, Page 193.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 209 Acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,7	5,5,7	4,4,0	4,5,7,2	8,8,0	B	1,7	5,5,7	4,6,0	4,5,6,9	6,4,0
	ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING			ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING	
C	1,7	5,5,5	3,4,0	4,5,6,9	6,2,0	D	1,7	5,5,5	3,2,0	4,5,7,2	8,6,0
	ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING			ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING	

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY Mr. James A. Purdy (FTS-8-722-6844) for

NAME / TITLE

Colonel Max R. Janairo, Jr. District Engineer

ORGANIZATION

Corps of Engineers, U. S. Army

DATE

11 December 1975

STREET & NUMBER

Federal Building 1000 Liberty Ave.

TELEPHONE

FTS-8-722-6800

CITY OR TOWN

Pittsburgh

STATE

PA 15222

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES

NO

NONE

James A. Purdy
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

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

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

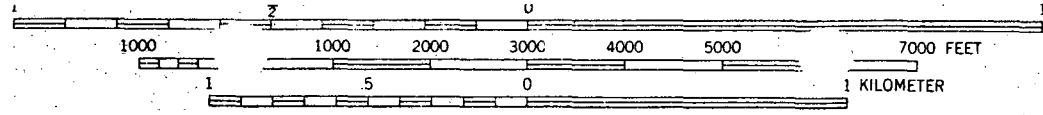
DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL



41° 17' 30"

80° 20' 00"

Lat. NW 41° 17' 24"
 NE 41° 17' 24"
 SE 41° 16' 51"
 SW 41° 16' 51"
 Long. NW 80° 19' 07"
 NE 80° 18' 49"
 SE 80° 18' 49"
 SW 80° 19' 07"

FREDONIA QUADRANGLE
 PENNSYLVANIA—MERCER CO.
 7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)
 SE/4 SHENANGO 15' QUADRANGLE