

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

RECEIVED

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

MAY 24 1988

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Lodgepole Opera House  
other names/site number NeHBS # CN05-1 OHBIN #05-22-03

2. Location

street & number West side of Oberfelder at Front  Not for publication  
city, town Lodgepole  Vicinity  
state Nebraska code NE county Cheyenne code 033 zip code 69149

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>      </u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u>      </u> objects
			<u>      </u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:  
Opera House Buildings in Nebraska 1867-1917  
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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.  See continuation sheet.  
James A. Shannon May 16, 1988  
Signature of certifying official Date  
Director, Nebraska State Historical Society  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:  
 entered in the National Register. Beth Boland 7/2/88  
 See continuation sheet.  
 determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.  
 determined not eligible for the National Register.  
 removed from the National Register.  
 other, (explain:)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Recreation & Culture: Theatre;  
music facility  
Social: Meeting hall

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Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Vacant/Not in use

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: One-part commercial block  
with false front

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Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation unknown  
walls Concrete  
roof Tin  
other False front of pressed tin

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**Describe present and historic physical appearance.**

The Lodgepole Opera House is located on the south side of the Union Pacific Railroad tracks; the elevator, stock yards, and lumber yard were all on the north side. Originally the opera house shared its block with the hotel and bank, but now the building stands isolated, surrounded by empty lots. Constructed in 1911 by Frank Isenberger as the upper floor of a garage, the cement block, two-story one-part commercial block structure measures 46'x70' and has a barn-style pitched tin roof and a false front scalloped with pressed tin shingles. "Lodgepole Opera House", painted in huge letters, remains visible on the false front above the windows. Access to the second-floor theatre is through a single door and narrow stair on the south end of the building front. A small ticket window is located immediately inside this door on the right; the ticket office was in the garage.

The auditorium is 45' wide and 58' long from the back windows to the edge of the stage. Low ceilings preclude a balcony, but a small, raised, enclosed wooden projection booth at the rear attests to the theatre's past use for motion pictures. Doors on either side of the stage give access to the backstage area, which is rather small. The ornate tin ceiling continues down the entire wall to the last angle of the pitched roof, ending about chest height. The simple wooden proscenium arch was painted blue, a color scheme continued on the woodwork of the doors to backstage and on the wainscoting below the 4' high stage, giving the impression that this opera house in its heyday was a cheerful, fun place to go.

The arch opening is 20' wide and 11' high; the stage itself is 18' deep. There is no apron, which helps attest to the building's use as much for community functions as for theatre. Wings on each side of the stage are about 12'6" wide. No dressing rooms exist.

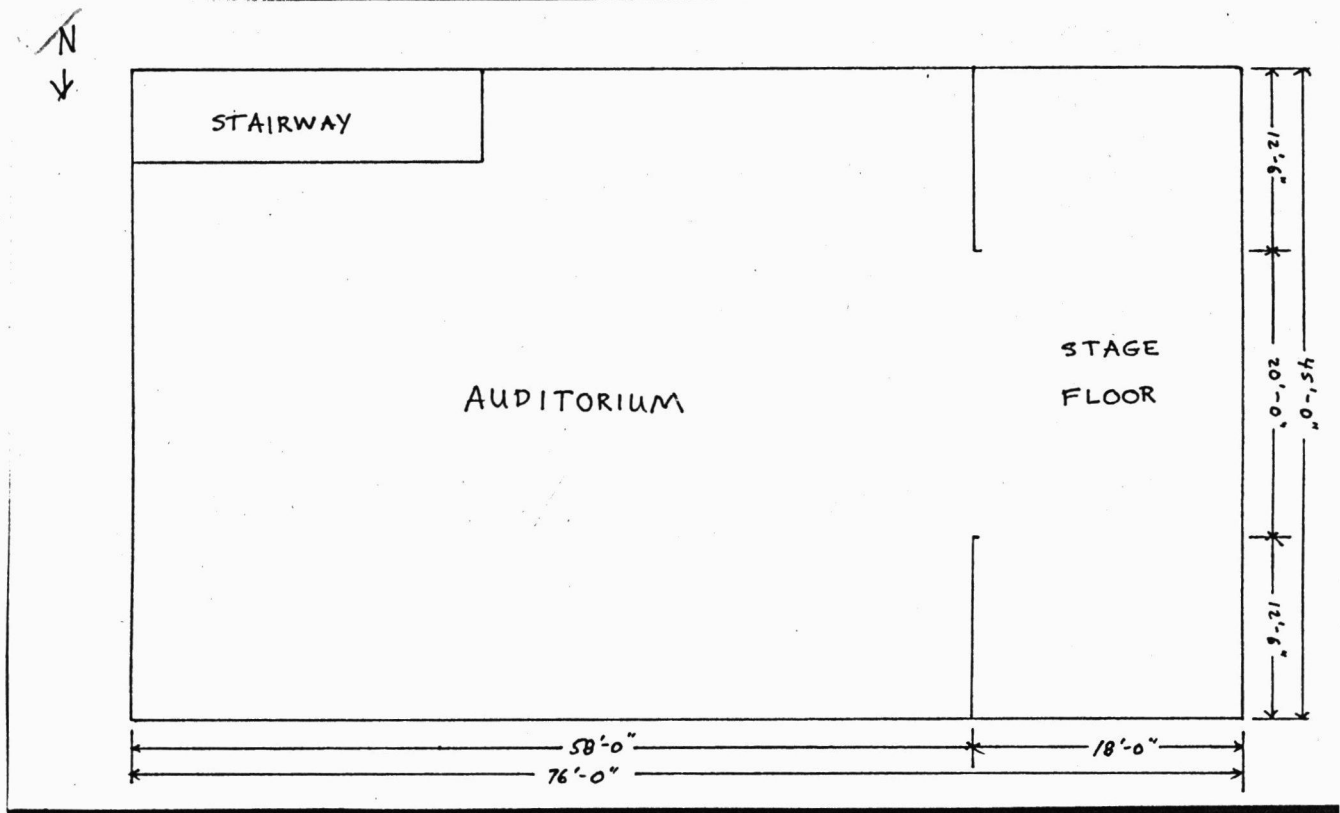
Except for a lean-to attached to the first floor on the west (rear) at a later time, the structural and historical integrity of the building and theatre has been preserved.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Floor plan, Lodge Pole Opera House, Lodge Pole



Credit: P. Leitner, Draftsman

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Performing Arts  
Entertainment/Recreation  
Social History

Period of Significance

1911-1917

Significant Dates

1911

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Isenberger, Frank (builder)

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Lodgepole Opera House is significant for its association with and in reference to the historic context "Aesthetic Systems: Itinerant and Local Performing Arts in Nebraska" and the property type of "Opera House Buildings in Nebraska, 1867 to 1917." Under Criterion A, this opera house is significant in the areas of the performing arts; entertainment/recreation; and social history, on a state level, as a well preserved example of an opera house building in Nebraska. The building retains a high degree of historical integrity, possessing the physical and associative characteristics to make it an eligible member of its property type.

This opera house is significant in the area of performing arts for bringing a variety of entertainment to the community of Lodgepole. As a facility for the performing arts, it offered productions such as home talent plays, musical concerts, impersonators, gospel singers, ventriloquists, touring stock companies, and classics like *Lena Rivers* and *Montana*. (See following table of Representative Entertainments, 1911-1917.)

This opera house is significant in the area of entertainment/recreation, since it provided a place where the whole community could gather to attend dances, basketball games, and lectures. (See following table of Representative Entertainments, 1911-1917.)

This opera house is significant in the area of social history because it gave Lodgepole a neutral, nonaffiliated location for Commercial Club meetings; Farmers Institutes; Ladies Aid Society; YMCA; basketball games; and high school commencement. (See following table of Representative Entertainments 1911-1917.) In the days before radio, television, and sound movies, activities at the opera house were anticipated for days or weeks ahead of time. It provided a place for people to get together to have a good time and forget their troubles over crops, weather, taxes, the railroads, and the generally hard life of settling the Great Plains.

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Bondegard, Bart. Personal interview. Lodge Pole: 22 May 1987.  
Bondegard, Burton. Telephone interviews. Lodge Pole: 17 May 1987 and 10 Sep. 1987.  
Campbell, Wayne. Telephone interview. Lodge Pole: 20 Oct. 1987.  
Hafer, Don. Telephone interview. Lodge Pole: 17 May 1987.  
*Lodge Pole Express*. 1 Jan. 1910 - 29 Dec. 1917.  
Lodgepole Opera House. Lodgepole site visit. 22 May 1987.  
Markel, Jean. Telephone interviews. Lodge Pole: 4 Oct., 20 Oct., and 24 Oct. 1987.  
Peterson, Andy. Telephone interview. Lodge Pole: 4 Oct. 1987.  
Quinn, Horace W. Letter to the author. Lodgepole: 1986.  
Quinn, Hort. Telephone interview. Lodge Pole: 24 Oct. 1987.  
Wise, Charlie. Telephone interview. Lodge Pole: 24 Oct. 1987.

See continuation sheet

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

Specify repository:

D. Layne Ehlers (see below)

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreeage of property Less than one [1] acre

UTM References

A 

1	3	6	9	8	1	7	0	4	5	5	7	6	4	0
Zone			Easting					Northing						

B 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

C 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

D 

Zone			Easting					Northing						

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

This property is described as the south 46-2/3 feet of Lots 1, 2, 3, and 4 of Block 1, Oberfelder's First Addition to Lodgepole, Cheyenne County, Nebraska.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the entire town lot(s) that have been historically associated with this property.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title D. Layne Ehlers, Principal Investigator  
organization OHBIN Study date April, 1988  
street & number 2302 South 11th telephone 402/435-6946  
city or town Lincoln state NE zip code 68502

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 1

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The period of significance derives from the original construction date of the building, 1911. Although Lodge Pole had had Young's Opera House since 1892 and Fenske's since 1897, the new building was considered "an ornament to the city" (*Lodge Pole Express* 18 Mar 1911) and attracted most of the town's entertainment business after its opening that summer. The period of significance continues through 1917, the year considered to signal the end of the opera house era in Nebraska, based on declining numbers of touring companies nationally and rising numbers of movie houses and automobiles. The use of the newer Withrow Hall for many social functions beginning about 1915; the new high school auditorium, built in 1916; and the proximity of the larger city of Sidney (19 miles) took most of the business away from the Lodge Pole Opera House, leaving only sporadic events dwindling in quantity year by year.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 2Lodge Pole Opera House, Lodge Pole  
Representative Entertainments, 1911-1917

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DATE	EVENT AND PERFORMERS
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**Social History**

Nov 1911	Farmer's Institute Commercial Club meeting
Oct 1912	Old Settlers' Reunion
Nov 1912	Commercial Club sponsoring Hon. J. L. McIntosh
Dec 1913	Annual banquet, Lodge Pole Commerce Club
Dec 1914	M.E. Sunday School & Lodge Pole H.S. Christmas entertainment
Oct 1915	Ladies Aid Society Meeting
Oct 1916	Senator Hitchcock, speaking
Nov 1917	Patriotic meeting YMCA Meeting

**Entertainment/Recreation**

Jul 1911	4th of July dance Dance
Sep 1911	W.O.W. "Hard Times" Dance
Nov 1911	Thanksgiving Day Dance
Dec 1911	Christmas Night Dance
Nov 1912	Social dance, Sidney's Stokes Orchestra
Dec 1912	Newton Wesley Gaines, speaker
Nov 1913	Social Dance Thanksgiving Eve Dance
Dec 1914	Masquerade ball
Oct 1915	Halloween masquerade party
Oct 1916	Public dance

**Performing Arts**

Oct 1911	<i>A Musical Mix-up</i> , home talent
Dec 1911	<i>Her Gloves</i> , home talent
Oct 1912	The Original Strollers Quartette
Nov 1912	Protean Concert Co.
Dec 1912	<i>The Girl and the Outlaw</i> w/ Roy LaMarr
Jan 1913	S. Platt Jones, entertainer and impersonator
Mar 1913	The Original Carolina Jubilee Singers

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

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Lodge Pole Opera House, Lodge Pole  
Representative Entertainments, 1911-1917

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DATE            EVENT AND PERFORMERS

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Performing Arts, cont'd.

Oct 1913	The Sidney Dixie Minstrels (Sidney, Nebraska home talent)
Dec 1913	<i>Lena Rivers</i> , Carl M. Dalton, mgr.
Jan 1914	<i>Ole Oleson in Spiritland</i> , Carl M. Dalton Company
Jan 1915	Woods Big Show
Feb 1915	<i>The Girl of the Sunny South</i> by the National Stock Co. The Great Entertainment, high school home talent
Nov 1915	Eska Wilson, ventriloquist
Oct 1917	Bankson & Morris' <i>Montana</i>
Nov 1917	<i>Lena Rivers</i>

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Photographs

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page 1

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The following information is the same for all Lodgepole photographs:

NAME OF PROPERTY: Lodgepole Opera House  
CITY, COUNTY, STATE: Lodgepole, Cheyenne County, Nebraska  
NeHBS SITE No.: CN05-1  
OHBIN SITE No.: 05-22-03  
NAME OF PHOTOGRAPHER: Christian H. Ehlers

PHOTO NUMBER: Lodgepole #1  
DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH (and NEGATIVE NUMBER): 05-22-87 (8705/4:15)  
LOCATION OF ORIGINAL NEGATIVE: Nebraska State Historical Society  
DESCRIPTION OF VIEW INDICATING DIRECTION OF CAMERA: Exterior view, looking  
northwest at the east (front) and south facades.

PHOTO NUMBER: Lodgepole #2  
DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH (and NEGATIVE NUMBER): 05-22-87 (8705/4:11)  
LOCATION OF ORIGINAL NEGATIVE: Nebraska State Historical Society  
DESCRIPTION OF VIEW INDICATING DIRECTION OF CAMERA: Interior view, looking west  
at the stage.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 88000947

Date Listed: 7/7/88

Lodgepole Opera House  
Property Name

Cheyenne  
County

NE  
State

Opera House Buildings in Nebraska 1867-1917  
Multiple Name

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This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

*Beth Boland*

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

*7/7/88*

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

=====  
Amended Items in Nomination:

Add to Historic Functions "Commerce/Trade -- business"

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DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

SLR  
23 - 3 - 0  
3 - 23 - 0  
23 - 15 - 0  
15 - 8 - 0  
R  
L

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

Name Opera House Buildings in Nebraska 1867-1917 MPS  
State Butler and other Counties, NEBRASKA

Nomination/Type of Review	Date Listed
COVER <b>Substantive Review</b>	
1. Allen's Opera House <b>Substantive Review</b> R 7/7/88	
2. Army Theatre <b>Substantive Review</b>	7-7-88 - SLR
3. Auditorium, The <b>Substantive Review</b> R 7/7/88	
4. Clem's Opera House <b>Substantive Review</b> R 7/7/88	
5. Diller, Anna C., Opera House <b>Substantive Review</b>	7/6/88
6. Ellen, Martha, Auditorium <b>Substantive Review</b> R 7/7/88	
7. Gehling's Theatre <b>Substantive Review</b> R 7/7/88	
8. Gourley's Opera House <b>Substantive Review</b>	7/6/88
9. IOOF Opera House (Hamilton County) <b>Substantive Review</b> R 7/7/88	
10. IOOF <sup>Hall +</sup> Opera House (Webster County) <b>Substantive Review</b>	7/6/88
11. Lawrence Opera House <b>Substantive Review</b> R 7/7/88	
12. Lodgepole Opera House <b>Substantive Review</b>	7-7-88 - SLR
13. New Opera House <b>Substantive Review</b> R 7/7/88	
14. Pospeshil Theatre <b>Substantive Review</b> R 7/7/88	
15. Schneider's Opera House <b>Substantive Review</b> R 7/7/88	
16. Steinauer Opera House <b>Substantive Review</b>	7/7/88 - SLR
17. Surprise Opera House <b>Substantive Review</b>	7/6/88
18. Table Rock Opera House <b>Substantive Review</b> R 7/7/88	
19. Tecumseh Opera House <b>Substantive Review</b> R 7/7/88	
20. Thorpe's Opera House <b>Substantive Review</b> R 7/7/88	
21. Warren's Opera House <b>Substantive Review</b> R 7/7/88	

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Lodgepole Opera House (Opera House Buildings  
in Nebraska 1867-1917 MPS)  
Cheyenne County  
NEBRASKA

Substantive Review

Working No. 5/24/86

Fed. Reg. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Due: 6/23/88 - 7/10/88

Action: ACCEPT 7-7-88

RETURN

REJECT

Federal Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

- resubmission
- nomination by person or local government
- owner objection
- appeal

Substantive Review:  sample  request  appeal  NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria Accept - A

Reviewer Boland

Discipline Historian

Date 7/7/88

see continuation sheet SLR

Nomination returned for:  technical corrections cited below  
 substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
	Public Acquisition	Accessible	

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

7. Description

Condition	Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed	
	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	
	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- alterations/integrity
- dates
- boundary selection

---

**8. Significance**

Period      Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates                                  Builder/Architect  
Statement of Significance (*in one paragraph*)

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- applicable criteria
- justification of areas checked
- relating significance to the resource
- context
- relationship of integrity to significance
- justification of exception
- other

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**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_  
Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_  
UTM References \_\_\_\_\_

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Verbal boundary description and justification

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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**12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification**

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

\_\_\_\_ national      \_\_\_\_ state      \_\_\_\_ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature


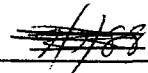
title                                  date

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**13. Other**

- Maps
- Photographs
- Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to \_\_\_\_\_

Signed  Date  Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



8700/4/15

LODGE POLE OPERA HOUSE

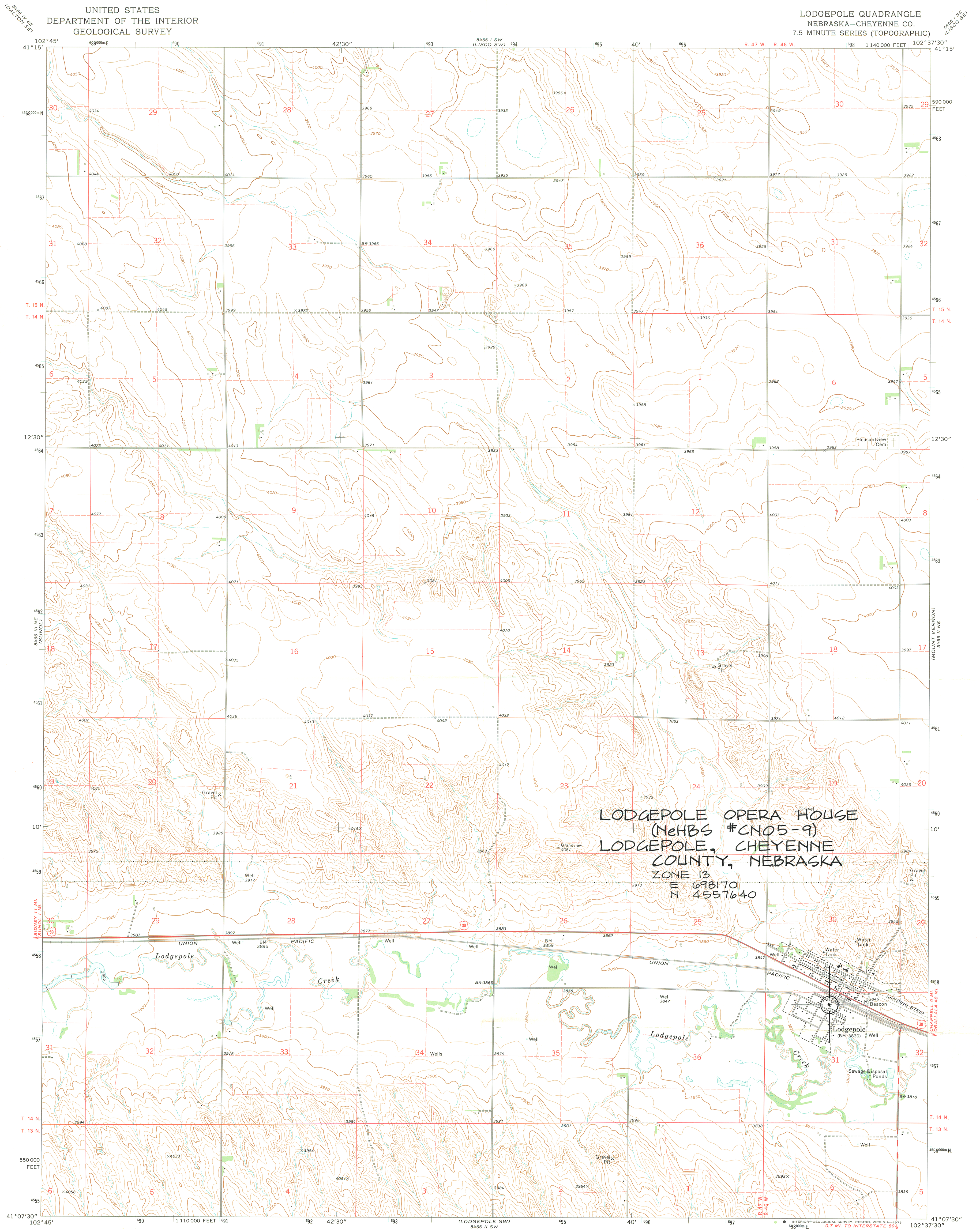
LODGEPOLE #1



8705/4 811

LODGE POLE OPERA HOUSE

LODGE POLE #2



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

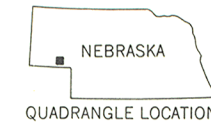
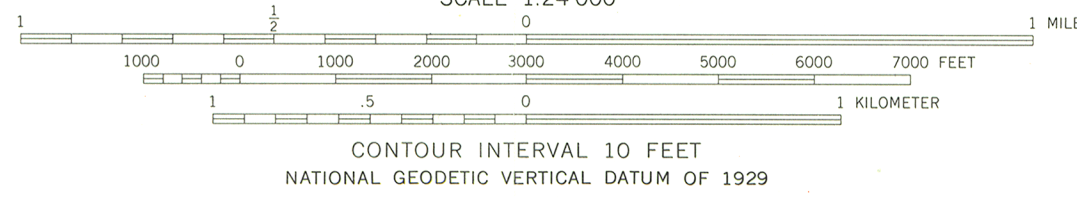
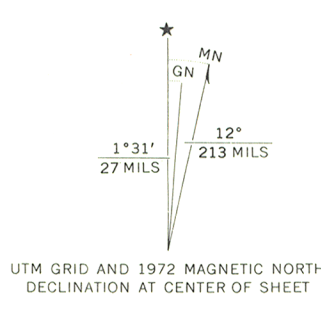
Control by USGS and USC&GS

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1972. Field checked 1972

Projection and 10,000-foot grid ticks: Nebraska coordinate system, south zone (Lambert conformal conic)

1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 13, shown in blue. 1927 North American datum

Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, hard surface	Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Secondary highway, hard surface	Unimproved road
Interstate Route	U. S. Route
	State Route

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

LOGEPOLE, NEBR.  
N4107.5-W10237.5/7.5  
1972

AMS 5466 II NW-SERIES V875