

35-LA-3, Lane County, Oregon
Native American Archaeological Sites of the Oregon Coast

NPS Form 10-900 (Rev. 10-90)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

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1. Name of Property

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historic name _____

other names/site number 35-LA-3, The Neptune Site

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2. Location

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street & number Neptune State Park not for publication
city or town Searose Beach vicinity
state Oregon code OR county Lane code 039 zip code 97498

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3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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 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 nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

James Hamrick

July 20, 1997

Signature of certifying official Deputy SHPO
Oregon State Historic Preservation Office

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

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4. National Park Service Certification

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I, hereby certify that this property is:

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

entered in the National Register
 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): _____

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5. Classification
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Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
___ private	___ building(s)		___ buildings
___ public-local	___ district		___ sites
<u>X</u> public-State	<u>X</u> site	<u>1</u>	___ structures
___ public-Federal	___ structure		___ objects
	___ object	<u>1</u>	___ Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

Name of related multiple property listing: Native American Archaeological Sites of the Oregon Coast

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6. Function or Use
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Historic Functions: Cat: Domestic Sub: Village site

Current Functions: Cat: Recreation and Culture Sub: Outdoor recreation

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7. Description
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Architectural Classification: N/A

Materials:

foundation	<u>N/A</u>
roof	<u>N/A</u>
walls	<u>N/A</u>
other	<u>N/A</u>

Narrative Description: 35-LA-3 is a *village site* and *shell midden* situated on the south bank of Gwynn Creek along an extensive stretch of rocky coast and pocket sand beaches located south of Cape Perpetua in Neptune State Park, Lane County, along the central Oregon Coast. This area provides access to a variety of environments, including rugged outer coast intertidal habitats, various nearshore communities, dense coniferous forest, and occasional stream and riparian environments. This is one of several shell midden sites in Neptune State Park that contain a priceless record of central Oregon Coast landscape and cultural developments over the millennia. 35-LA-3 was first recorded by Lloyd Collins (1953) who described housepits along the creek on either side of the coast highway and shell midden "near the ocean." Collins estimated the site to be roughly 200 m x 50 m wide and about a meter deep. In 1973, 35-LA-3 was the scene of an Oregon State University excavation directed by Richard Ross. According to Minor (1986:53):

Excavations were concentrated in the western portion of the site on top of a high consolidated sand dune where Collins had indicated "middens" were located. The excavations reached depths of up to 1.5 m below surface, but no housepits were encountered. An early radiocarbon date of 8310 ± 110 years . . . was obtained from this site, but it is clearly inconsistent with the nature of the artifact assemblage recovered (Richard Ross, personal communication). A later date of 320 ± 45 years . . . derived from a sample of bone found just below the heavy shell layer at about 1.2 to 1.4 m below the ground surface, is thought to be more reliable. The site is interpreted to represent a seasonally-occupied campsite. A complete report on the results of the excavations has never appeared, but the molluscan remains have been described by Barner (1982) and the fish remains have been described by Zontek (1983).

In 1976, as part of Richard Ross' (1976) survey of Oregon Coast State Parks, Debra Barnes visited the site, and separated it into two discrete loci. Area A includes the northern site area located adjacent to Gwynn Creek, while Area B was a separate shell midden capping a low knoll about 100 m to the south. Rick Minor (1986:54) evaluated the site a decade later, noting that it extended onto State Parks property east of US Highway 101 for a substantial distance, into an area disturbed by logging. He also noted shell midden up to a meter deep eroding from seacliff exposures for a distance of 40 m and suggested that 35-LA-3 was part of an "extensive village site complex at the

mouth of Gwynn Creek" (Minor 1986:53). Minor (1986:54) concluded that the "great size of this site, the significant depth of the cultural deposits, and its location in a setting protected from winds all combine to suggest that the Neptune site does in fact represent a long-term habitation site as indicated by Collins." Jon Erlandson and Madonna Moss visited the site several times between 1993 and 1996. In Area A, they confirmed the presence of shell midden deposits east of US Highway 101, noted at least two discrete shell midden strata exposed in the banks of Gwynn Creek in the north-central area, and identified a buried burned rock feature eroding out of a charcoal-rich and non-shell midden soil about 1 m below the surface in a seacliff exposure in the northwest area. Analysis of mussel (*Mytilus californianus*) shells from midden strata 45-50 cm and 70-80 cm below surface in the north-central area produced uncorrected ¹⁴C dates of 1200 ± 80 RYBP (Beta-61122) and 1090 ± 60 RYBP (Beta-61123), respectively (Erlandson and Moss 1993:40). In Area B, Moss and Erlandson found dense shell midden deposits up to 110 cm deep exposed in a west-facing seacliff for 40 m north-south. Site constituents were dominated by shells of California mussel and other rocky coast species (acorn and gooseneck barnacles, limpets, pholad clams, chitons, and dogwinkles), but the remains of gaper clam (*Tresus nuttalli*), burned rock, charcoal, and salmon vertebrae were also observed. Analysis of shell fragments from the top and bottom of the shell midden in Area B produced uncorrected dates of 300 ± 60 RYBP (Beta-61124) and 430 ± 70 RYBP (Beta-61125), respectively. After calibration, these two dates span the transition between the Late Holocene Precontact and Postcontact periods, from about AD 1690 to AD 1890 (Erlandson and Moss 1993:83). The available data suggest that 35-LA-3 is a multicomponent site, encompassing an area up to 200 m north-south by 100 m east-west, and with dense shell midden deposits as much as 1.5 m deep.

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8. Statement of Significance
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Applicable National Register Criteria

- 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 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

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a 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.

Areas of Significance: Archaeology: Prehistoric
Historic -- Aboriginal
Ethnic Heritage: Native American

Period of Significance: Late Holocene Postcontact
Late Holocene Precontact
Early Holocene?

Significant Dates: 35-LA-3A: 320 + 45 RYBP (AD 1550)
1090 + 60 RYBP (AD 1170)
1200 + 80 RYBP (AD 1030)
8310 + 110 RYBP (7360 BC)
35-LA-3B: 300 + 60 RYBP (AD 1890)
430 + 70 RYBP (AD 1690)

Significant Person: N/A

Cultural Affiliation: Aalsea

Architect/Builder: N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance: 35-LA-3 is a *village site*, a *shell midden*, and may also contain a lithic site component. This large and complex site contains two major loci and may first have been occupied as much as 9,000 years ago. Collins (1953) identified house pits at the site, although surface expressions of these may have been obliterated by park and highway construction. According to Lyman (1991), the Neptune site may have been occupied during the Early Holocene, but the association of artifacts with an early ¹⁴C date remains equivocal and further research is needed to confirm this proposition. The site clearly was occupied during the Late Holocene Precontact and Postcontact periods, beginning by at least AD 1000. Minor (1986:53) described 35-LA-3 as part of a large site complex (see 35-LA-2) with major research potential. Despite impacts from seacliff erosion, highway building, park construction, and looting, the site remnants are extensive and retain their fundamental spatial integrity (Erlandson and Moss 1993). With stratified and well preserved shell midden deposits, as well as excellent preservation of shell and bone tools and faunal remains, this highly significant site has the potential to yield valuable data on a variety of aspects of past Alsea environments, subsistence, settlement and demography, site structure, architecture, and technology. 35-LA-3 is also one of several sites in Neptune State Park that together appear to span the transition from the Precontact and Postcontact periods. These characteristics suggest that 35-LA-3 can contribute valuable scientific data relevant to a variety of questions related to Research Topics #1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6. Finally, as a tangible link to the past, 35-LA-3 is highly significant to descendants of the Alsea and other Oregon Coast tribes.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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Barner, Debra C. (1982) *Shell and Archaeology: An Analysis of Shellfish Procurement and Utilization on the Central Oregon Coast*. M.A. thesis, Department of Anthropology, Oregon State University, Corvallis.

Collins, Lloyd R. (1953) *Archaeological Survey of the Oregon Coast from June 1951 - December 1952, Final Report*. Department of Anthropology, University of Oregon. Eugene.

Erlandson, Jon M. and Madonna L. Moss (1993) *An Evaluation, Survey, and Dating Program for Archaeological Sites on State Lands of the Central Oregon Coast*. Department of Anthropology, University of Oregon. Eugene.

Lyman, R. Lee (1991) *Prehistory of the Oregon Coast*. Academic Press, New York.

Minor, Rick (1986) *An Evaluation of Archaeological Sites on State Park Lands Along the Oregon Coast*. Heritage Research Associates Report No. 44. Eugene.

Ross, Richard (1976) *Archaeological Survey of State Park Lands along the Oregon Coast*. Department of Anthropology, Oregon State University. Corvallis.

Zontek, T. (1983) *Aboriginal Fishing at Seal Rock (35LNC14) and Neptune (35LA3): Late Prehistoric Archaeological Sites on the Central Oregon Coast*. M.A. thesis, Department of Anthropology, Oregon State University, Corvallis.

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 repositories: University of Oregon, State Museum of Anthropology
Oregon State University, Dept. of Anthropolgy

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10. Geographical Data

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Acreege of Property 5.4 acres USGS Quadrangle: Yachacts, Ore. (1984), 1:24,000

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Description of Point

Boundary Justification: Site boundaries, defined during multiple episodes of surface reconnaissance (Collins 1953; Ross 1976; Minor 1986; Erlandson and Moss 1993) and subsurface excavations in the northwestern site area, are based on the distribution of archaeological materials typical of Oregon Coast shell midden sites (shellfish remains, animal bone, burned rock, artifacts of stone or other materials, and/or dark culturally enriched soils). Site boundaries are also defined, in part, by geographic features

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11. Form Prepared By
=====

name/title	<u>Jon M. Erlandson and Madonna L. Moss, Assistant Professors</u>	date	<u>August 31, 1996</u>
organization	<u>University of Oregon</u>	telephone	<u>(541) 346-6076</u>
street & number	<u>Department of Anthropology</u>		
city or town	<u>Eugene, OR 97403-1218</u>		

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Property Owner
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name	<u>State of Oregon</u>	telephone	<u>(503) 378-5001 ext. 226</u>
department	<u>Oregon State Parks and Recreation Department</u>		
street & number	<u>1115 Commercial Street NE</u>		
city & state	<u>Salem, OR 97310-1001</u>		

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section Photographs Page 1 35-LA-3, Lane County, Oregon
Native American Archaeological Sites of the Oregon Coast

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Photograph 1 of 2

3. Photographer: Jon M. Erlandson
4. March 28, 1994
5. University of Oregon State Museum of Anthropology
6. Overview of site vicinity, with site Area B on bluff in center; looking southeast
7. Photograph 1 of 2; Black and White Roll 7, Frame 29A

Photograph 2 of 2

3. Photographer: Jon M. Erlandson
4. March 28, 1994
5. University of Oregon State Museum of Anthropology
6. Overview of site Area A; looking south
7. Photograph 2 of 2; Black and White Roll 7, Frame 31A

Scoring on Scale of 1 to 5

- 5 - Excellent
- 4 - Very good
- 3 - Good
- 2 - Fair
- 1 - Poor
- 0 - Nonexistent

RATING 50

PRE-HISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE

35-LA-3
THE NEPTUNE SITE

COUNTY LANE

TOWN/VICINITY SEAROSE BEACH

EVALUATOR ATHERTON

DATE FEB. 13, 1997

Final Rating

- 50 - 45 Of prime significance
- 44 - 40 Significant
- 39 - 35 Noteworthy
- 34 - 30 Also considered

NATIONAL REGISTER SELECTION RATING SHEET

Checklist on Methodology

- | | <u>Yes</u> | <u>No</u> |
|---|------------|------------|
| 1. Does the testing strategy provide adequate information on integrity and content of site? | <u>✓</u> | <u> </u> |
| 2. Have site boundaries, horizontal & vertical, been adequately determined? | <u>✓</u> | <u> </u> |
| 3. Has site function been determined? | <u>✓</u> | <u> </u> |
| 4. Have the temporal boundaries of the site been established? | <u>✓</u> | <u> </u> |
| 5. Has context been provided by relating this site to previous archaeology? | <u>✓</u> | <u> </u> |

Very early date still in question

<u>Factors</u>	<u>Relative Importance</u>		<u>Score</u>	<u>Weighted Rating</u>
1. <u>Integrity of site</u> - Site is essentially undisturbed, unencroached.	5.0	X	<u>5</u>	= <u>25</u>
2. <u>Interpretive potential</u> - Site has yielded, or has potential of yielding important information related to an established body of knowledge about prehistory and/or prehistoric environments.	5.0	X	<u>5</u>	= <u>25</u>

TOTAL 50

Scoring on Scale of 1 to 5

- 5 - Excellent
- 4 - Very good
- 3 - Good
- 2 - Fair
- 1 - Poor
- 0 - Nonexistent

RATING 47.5

PRE-HISTORIC ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE 35 LA 3

COUNTY LANE

TOWN/VICINITY NEPTUNE STATE PARK
SEAROSE BEACH

EVALUATOR SCOTT E. STUEMKE
DATE _____

Final Rating
50 - 45 Of prime significance
44 - 40 Significant
39 - 35 Noteworthy
34 - 30 Also considered

NATIONAL REGISTER SELECTION RATING SHEET

Checklist on Methodology

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
1. Does the testing strategy provide adequate information on integrity and content of site?	<u>X</u>	_____
2. Have site boundaries, horizontal & vertical, been adequately determined?	<u>X</u>	_____
3. Has site function been determined?	<u>X</u>	_____
4. Have the temporal boundaries of the site been established?	<u>X</u>	_____
5. Has context been provided by relating this site to previous archaeology?	<u>X</u>	_____

<u>Factors</u>	<u>Relative Importance</u>		<u>Score</u>	<u>Weighted Rating</u>
1. <u>Integrity of site</u> - Site is essentially undisturbed, unencroached.	5.0	X	<u>4.75</u> =	<u>23.75</u>
2. <u>Interpretive potential</u> - Site has yielded, or has potential of yielding important information related to an established body of knowledge about prehistory and/or prehistoric environments.	5.0	X	<u>4.75</u> =	<u>23.75</u>

TOTAL 47.5

**Portions of this file have been redacted to
meet Oregon State law (ORS 192.501(11)).**

**More information may be available upon request.
Contact the Oregon State Archaeologist for details.**
