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FHBRO Number 96-99

Jasper National Park, Alberta

**Isaac Creek Warden Cabin**

South Boundary Trail

The Isaac Creek Warden Cabin was constructed in 1927. Its designer is unknown, but the plan conforms closely to the standard plan prescribed in 1919 for patrol cabins. The cabin maintains its original function as a Patrol Cabin for park wardens. Alterations include the addition of a radio antenna, the installation of a concrete foundation and concrete sonotubes for the porch, new hardwood floors, new porch posts and deck, the replacement of bottom round logs and the application of rolled asphalt roofing in 1995. Parks Canada is the custodian. See FHBRO Building Docket 96-99.

**Reasons for Designation**

The Isaac Creek Warden Cabin on the South Boundary Trail was designated Recognized because of its environmental significance as well as its architectural importance and its historical associations.

The structure faces south and is located on the edge of a meadow, close to the intersection of Isaac Creek and the Brazeau River. The relationship between the cabin and its immediate surroundings, including the Wood/Tack Shed and day corral, remains largely unchanged. Through both its form and materials, the building contributes to the character of its natural setting. The visually prominent location is a destination for travelers along the South Boundary Trail.

The Warden Cabin is a one storey log structure with a gabled roof and a large, covered porch. It was designed as a single room structure. The functional plan of the structure, along with its craftsmanship and materials, respect the long-standing prescription for a rustic design within national parks.

The Warden Cabin is associated with the park program of constructing a series of outposts to be used by boundary patrols of the Warden Service for controlling poaching activities. The trail's location further contributes to the continued use of the back-country cabin.

**Character Defining Elements**

The heritage value of the Isaac Creek Warden Cabin resides in all aspects of its form, materials, construction techniques, fenestration, layout and setting.

The Warden Cabin is a modest one-storey structure with a gabled roof, chimney and simple massing. These features reinforce the building's rustic character. The cabin is

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of high quality construction. Its walls are constructed with horizontally laid, peeled spruce logs which are saddle notched at the corners. The logs are evenly extended at the corner joints, except at the entrance gable where they are extended and supported by log posts to create a large, sheltered porch area. The roof has generous overhangs. The roof brackets, queen posts, collar tie and asymmetrical door with side window add visual interest to the entrance. These features all contribute to the cabin's rustic appearance.

Peeled logs, exposed log rafter tails, roll roofing edges, simple door and window trims and cross-braced porch railings create a simple, rustic design which should be preserved by repairing in kind and by emphasising maximum retention of original material.

Logs appear to be chinked along splits. This repair technique may not be appropriate and should be investigated further.

The current, simple colour scheme of green roll roofing, brown stained logs, white chinking, white painted windows, green door and shutters follow the rustic aesthetic. The brown stain finish on the logs reflects a functional approach to maintenance and should not be altered without carefully analyzing appropriate finishes and patina.

The horizontal, two-over-two wood sash windows are centered along the longitudinal facades. They simplify and modernize the window expression. Future replacements should be based on historic precedent. The smaller window on the gable has a fine-scale three-over-two mullion pattern. All windows have vertical plank shutters. The building also has a wood screen door and a vertical wood plank entrance door. The cabin's doors and windows contribute to the rustic character.

The open volume of the white-painted interior features exposed log walls and pole rafters, log through-purlins and plank roof sheathing. The interior is in keeping with the rustic character of the building. The cookstove, space heater, cabinets and other features should be investigated to determine their relation to the history of the building. Appropriate conservation methods should then be employed.

The relationship of the cabin to the outbuildings and to the day corral is an important aspect of the scenic setting to be protected. The radio antenna detracts from the simple form of the building; its relocation should be considered. The surrounding

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ground plane cover should not be overly-manicured or allowed to grow to scrub height.

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For further guidance, please refer to the *FHBRO Code of Practice*.

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