

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Webber Lake Hotel

Other names/site number: Webber Lake Resort; Webber's Ranch

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A



(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: Off Jackson Meadow Road/Tahoe National Forest Road 7

City or town: Sierraville State: California County: Sierra

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A X B ___ C ___ D

<p>_____ Signature of certifying official/Title:</p> <p>_____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</p>	<p>_____ Date</p>
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In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official: _____ **Date** _____

Title : _____ **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government** _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:
 ___ entered in the National Register
 ___ determined eligible for the National Register
 ___ determined not eligible for the National Register
 ___ removed from the National Register
 ___ other (explain:) _____

 Signature of the Keeper

 Date of Action

5. Classification Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private: Public – State
 Public – Local Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s) District
 Site
 Structure
 Object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
_____ 1 _____	_____ 0 _____	buildings
_____	_____	sites

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_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register None

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: Hotel

HEALTH CARE: Resort Facility

TRANSPORTATION: Road-Related

RECREATION AND CULTURE: Outdoor Recreation

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions.)

HEALTH CARE: Resort Facility

RECREATION AND CULTURE: Outdoor Recreation

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions.)

MID 19TH CENTURY REVIVAL: No Style/Vernacular

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Log-construction, wood panel walls, metal roof, wooden double-sash windows

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Webber Lake Hotel (APN 014-090-008) is situated on the north end of Webber Lake in a rural area of Sierra County. The hotel is located on Forest Road 86 off Jackson Meadows Road, or Tahoe National Forest Road 7, off State Route 89 (see **Figure 1** and **Figure 2**). Built in 1860, the hotel is approximately 50 feet north of the Webber Lake shoreline and is accompanied by period buildings that date from 1850s into the 1960s. The 2 ½-story gabled building is set on a north-south axis, fronting its namesake lake. The hotel's architectural style is predominantly vernacular with no specific style but retains subtle architectural details. These features, which are consistent with trends of the mid-nineteenth century, include a cavetto door surround and blind pilasters on the front, south-facing door. Other elements include a south gable elevation featuring a second-story front porch supported by chamfered columns, reminiscent to the Greek Revival period.

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Much of the interior reflects its time and includes paint colors, wallpaper patterns, paneled doors, and wood trim typical to the late-nineteenth century. Over the years, the Webber Lake Hotel has had a few rooms converted into private living spaces on all floors, and some historic fabric has been altered; however, much of its original character-defining elements and original hotel layout are retained.

Auxiliary resources surround the hotel, including the 1850s Webber Station—an historic 2 ½-story building with the same horizontal weatherboard siding as is on the main building. The station was used to possibly collect tolls for wagons during the heyday of Henness Pass Road (see **Photo 1**). Other outbuildings linked to Webber Lake surround the two buildings and are associated with different periods that are significant to Sierra County. Although the hotel, station, and its associate buildings potentially represent an historic district, only the Webber Lake Hotel is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

In June 2015, architectural historian/historic preservation consultant Corri Jimenez wrote the “Webber Lake Hotel Historic Structures Report” as a preservation treatment document prepared for the Tahoe-Donner Land Trust.¹ Architect Dennis Zirbel completed the architectural drawings for the building, and engineer Douglas Gadow, P.E. S.E. consulted on the hotel’s structural system for its rehabilitation. Much of the original text and technical analysis from the treatment document is in this National Register nomination.

Narrative Description

The Webber Lake Hotel (1860) is located on a large 313-acre parcel and is a 2 ½-story, hand-hewn, log-constructed building clad with horizontal weatherboards set on fieldstone footings that are under a significant amount of dirt settlement. The vernacular hotel retains its original 6/6 wood sash windows and paneled wood doors. The interior has wood paneled walls that are covered with period wallpaper, paint, and trim boards.

EXTERIOR

The Webber Lake Hotel is approximately 21 feet 6 inches wide and 83 feet 3 inches long. It stands about 31 feet high at the peak of its gabled roof. The building has approximately 10-inch wide walls of hand-hewn and squared, tamarack pine logs, which are set on edge. Adz markings are evident where the logs are exposed. The logs are chinked with a vernacular material made of lime-mixed mortar with a straw binder and newspaper insulation crammed in-between the logs. The south (front) elevation’s porch was rebuilt sometime post-1950 to accommodate the west elevation stairs, however, retains the original chamfered posts and supportive beams. Horizontal wood weatherboards, or colonial siding, clad and protect the log superstructure. These boards have a 4-inch wide exposure. Colonial siding is a unique board type that has no beveled edge, or rabbet, locking the boards together. Each board is the same thickness on the top as well as the bottom and is fastened with square-cut nails. Most of the windows are original 6-over-6 sash wood windows with wood pegs, and the doors all are 4-paneled mortise and tenoned wood doors. The foundation is set on stacked stone footings around the perimeter that are buried under approximately 1 foot of dirt sediment.²

¹ Dennis E Zirbel, Architect, Douglas Gadow, P.E., S.E., and Corri Jimenez, M.S. “Historic Structures Report: 1860 Webber Lake Hotel, Webber Lake, Sierra County, California.” June 2015.

² Douglas Gadow, P.E., S.E. “Personal communication with Corri Jimenez,” May 14, 2018.

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South Elevation

The Webber Lake Hotel's south elevation is the main, historic front and is set about 6-12 inches above ground level (see **Figure 3** and **Photo 2**). As a gable end, the hotel's elevation has a prominent second-story porch, ornamented with a simple wood railing. The building features subtle design details not specific to any style and is more vernacular constructed. One character-defining element showcased on the south elevation is the front doorway. It has a cavetto cornice supported by two pilasters with block plinths, typically found in Egyptian Revival buildings (1840-1880) (see **Photo 3**).³ The front central door is a typical 4-panel wood door with an Italianate-style locking system, which is contemporary to the 1860s.

Two middle columns on the first floor support the second-floor porch and a column set in the center of the second floor supports a ½-story of the attic. Three principal beams run the building's length on a north-south axis and support the second floor as well as its porch. These beams are lap-jointed at the corners. Original floor joists are best seen under the porch's second floor and appear to be 2x8s with water-powered saw marks still visible. The porch on the second floor has a simple railing with square rails, which are joined into the chamfered columns, another classical detail. There is evidence the porch's west and east corners at the railing were probably at one time 6 inches higher. The decking on both the first and second floor of the porch is surfaced with plywood and not an original material.

An original 1860s window is located on the elevation's first floor. It is a 6/6 wood sash window with wavy, single pane glass and delicate ½-inch wide muntins (see **Photo 2**). Wooden pegs join the rails at the corners, and window stops are located on the inside of the jambs that hold up the top sash. Window stops are typical parts found in 1860s windows and pre-date the sash weights found in many Victorian-era windows, which also involved cords and pulleys. The window's trim is a simple board with a lintel and sill. Since the 1860s, a few windows have been replaced on the elevation, which includes a 2/2 wood sash window on the southeast corner of the first floor. It was added sometime in the late-nineteenth century. Another (c.1900s) 2/2 wood sash window is located on the first floor's east corner.

On the second floor, the southeast and center windows were replaced with 8-lite, double-pane vinyl windows with pressed-in muntins, and lower sliding glass windows on the bottom. These two windows were added in the past 10 years. Historically, the center window was a door that had been added post-1950 (see **Figure 10, Figures 11-15**). A 4-panel wood door is located on the west corner. The top two panels were replaced with glass panes; this door historically was a window. In the gable, a modern vinyl window was added post-1984, replacing a historic 6/6 wood sash window (see **Figure 18**).

An approximately 4-foot wide wood sign is centered on the south elevation that reads: "WEBBER LAKE HOTEL/BUILT IN 1860 BY DR DAVID GOULD WEBBER/THE LAST OF 30 HOSTELERIES ALONG THE/HISTORIC HENNESS PASS ROAD/MARKER PLACED BY/WM M.STEWART CHAP OF E. CLAMPUS VITUS."⁴

East Elevation

³ Virginia Savage McAlester. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2013.

⁴ It is unknown if the Webber Lake Hotel is the "last" of the establishments on Henness Pass Road; however, it is believed to be the oldest intact one on the route.

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The Webber Lake Hotel's east elevation is visually divided into three sections that include the south-facing (front) porch, a middle section with equally distributed window fenestration, and a rear, more functional/utilitarian section (see **Figure 4** and **Photo 4**). The elevation has a gentle slope to the lakefront, and the north end has a significant amount of dirt that hugging the elevation and obscuring the bottom plate. This layer of soil, approximately 12 inches deep, conceals a few of the elevation's door thresholds (see **Photo 4** and **Photo 5**).

The east elevation is clad with horizontal wood weatherboards that protect the original log structure, and are possibly 40 feet in length. The original log construction is exposed at a door on the northwest corner. The 9-inch wide logs are visible in the jamb (see **Photo 5**). They were hewn on the side and cut into "boards." Due to the building's settling in its over 150 years, the logs appear to have shifted. This is evident in the buckling of the wood weatherboards in the middle and end sections of the elevation. It is hypothesized there are two physical log structures that abut or lap in the middle, causing this elevation's middle at the weatherboards to buckle. Square head cut nails are visible on all of the weatherboards indicating that it is an unaltered elevation. Evidence in the interior floor plan shows "blocked" areas that correlate to elevations and demonstrate that the hotel may have been log-cribbed in the middle (see **Figure 6**). This likely occurred in two separate construction campaigns in and around 1860. The roof's east slope is corrugated sheetmetal; a stovepipe flue opening is evident in the first floor's main room (Room 101) and is post-1950 (see **Figure 17**).

Most of the windows visible on both floors of the southeast end are historic 6/6 wood sash windows. Many of the much smaller, oddly shaped windows on the northern end appear to be historic openings. On the first floor, one original window is covered with a wooden panel. It is in a storage space (Room 103) behind the kitchen (Room 102). There is a 6-lite wood window on the first floor in a workshop (Room 107) that was a door. This is evident in historic images of the building's elevation, which shows two doors on the north end, and is supported by evidence of the opening for a door threshold (see **Figure 11**).

On the second floor, two windows in the middle section have been changed to sliding glass vinyl windows, and the bottom sashes are covered with horizontal wood boards. These two vinyl windows are in a kitchen (Room 203) and bathroom (Room 204) for the second floor apartment (see **Figure 6**). Historically, these windows appear to have been 6/6 wood sash windows similar to others on this elevation. Two windows on the second floor are boarded up and wood panel covers; the windows themselves are missing, but were probably smaller-sized 6/6 wood sash windows in a second-floor storage room (Room 209). Another 6-lite wood sash window is turned on edge, but historically it was a sash window.

North Elevation

The Webber Lake Hotel's north elevation is a gable end with horizontal weatherboards covering the log structure just like the other elevations of the building (see **Figure 5** and **Photo 6**). Some of the boards on this elevation are not original; wider boards are located prominently on the first floor. These boards may have been installed as repairs, or they could possibly serve as evidence that there were openings on this floor at one time.

An historic 5-panel double door, which dates to the early twentieth century, is located on the first floor at the end of the hallway (Room 106). A 6/6 wood sash window is located on the northwest corner, which has been converted into an outlet for plumbing stem pipes that exit the building's

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end. A single-leaf door is located on the elevation's second floor, and historic trim surrounds the exterior's opening, which is concealed on the second floor. It is believed this door may have been an historic door to the second floor since no interior staircase is evident. It could have been replaced sometime in the 1950s when the present staircase was added to the west elevation.

As in the south elevation, a 1/1 sash, vinyl replacement window is located in the gable end. The opening was once filled, possibly with a 6/6 wood sash window, similar to the one that was on the south elevation (see **Figure 18**). A small ghost mark detail is located on the trim board on the northwest corner, and a gabled addition may have been attached to the elevation.

West Elevation

Like the east elevation, the Webber Lake Hotel's west elevation is visually divided into three sections: a south-facing porch front, a middle section, and a more functional rear section (see **Figure 4, Photo 7**). Like other elevations, the west elevation is clad with horizontal wood siding to protect the original log structure. These boards are continuous, and are possibly as much as 40 feet in length. As on the east elevation, they were hewn on the sides, then cut into boards. Due to the building's settling in its over 150 years, the logs appear to have shifted, evident in buckling of the wood weatherboards in the middle and end sections of the elevation. The theory is the hotel was built in two stages around 1860, and is supported by buckling of the weatherboards on the east and west elevations. All elevations have intact square-cut nails, indicating this is historic. In addition to the buckling sides, blocked areas on the interior floor plan correlate to the elevations and demonstrate the hotel maybe log-cribbed in the middle (see **Figure 6**).

The roof's west slope is lined of standing-seam sheetmetal. A metal stovepipe punctures the northern end, and a brick chimney with a metal cap is evident on the southern end. The northern end chimney appears to be a period chimney (see **Figures 11-14**). The current staircase on the west elevation that leads up to the second floor's south elevation was added sometime post-1950.

On the first floor, most of the windows on the south end of the elevation are historic 6/6 wood sash windows and are intact, although they are behind wood shutters in the hallway (Room 106) (see **Figure 4** and **Figure 6**). A 5-foot-wide doorway opening on the first floor is evident. Featuring flashing above its lintel, it was a side entrance into the first-floor hallway (Room 106). It is theorized that an elaborate 4-panel door with side lites and transom located on the second floor (Room 203) may have been the door that fit in this opening since it is the same width. A second door on the northern end of the first floor is covered and may have been an addition, but little information is known on this door. On the second floor, most of the windows on the south end of the elevation are historic 6/6 wood sash windows and are intact. A window on the northern end was converted into a 5-panel door, added in the 1920-30s.

INTERIOR

In addition to the original layout, the interior of the Webber Lake Hotel retains many of its historic components including muslin wallpaper coverings, Prussian blue paint, and vertical wood paneling. The interior walls vary from 2-inch wide, tongue-and-groove partition walls to substantial framed walls mortised into wood beams. These were possibly constructed with hewn or water-powered wood posts. The walls on the second floor appear to line up with first floor walls, although more investigation is needed to understand the hotel's structural engineering. There is one space in the middle of the hotel that connects all floors (Rooms 105/104, Rooms 204, and Room 305). It is approximately 2 feet wide, and connects each floor vertically (see **Figure**

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6). Many of these interior wall spaces are inaccessible, but it is hypothesized that vertical wood timbers connect the hotel floors and exterior log walls. This may explain why the east and west elevations' weatherboards are bulging.

A few interior partition walls were removed to repurpose some rooms. Two rooms on the south (front) on both floors are believed to have once been communal rooms. The second-floor room is now a private rental unit (Room 203) (see **Figure 6**). Each apartment on the second floor and attic is equipped with a kitchen and a bathroom. Wood studs or posts as ghost marks are evident in the workshop (Room 107) and are approximately 4-6 inches in width. The hotel's floor joists are approximately 4x8 inch wood beams visible in a first floor storage room (Room 104) and in a second floor bathroom (Room 203) where modern plumbing pipes are also visible. The joists run on an east-west axis notched into the logs' exterior walls, which is visible due to a missing board (see **Photo 5**). Other original wood details include baseboards, ogee cornices, and wood trim—all between 4-8 inches in width. The hotel's tongue-and-groove wood floorboards are exposed on the first floor's hallway (Room 106). The 6-inch wide planks now undulate due to the building's settling and movement over time. Linoleum, carpet, plywood, and concrete are visible in varying rooms, which perhaps cover historic floorboards. The original doors are 4-panel, single-leaf wood doors hinged on iron pintles as hinges on the jambs, which are historic in 1860 buildings. Later doors, c. 1900s-1920s, are 5-panel wood doors. A few hollow core doors were added in the 1950-70s, best seen in the attic rooms. Some historic doors are set on typical iron hinge; however, the pintels are still attached to the jamb (see **Photo 17**).

Many of the rooms in the hotel have historic wallpaper and paint finishes that date to the mid to late 19th century. The ceiling is a typical tongue-and-groove wood board to which muslin is attached, followed by wallpaper. Muslin is also nailed to the ceiling boards. The wallpaper in the hotel is a faded red rose pattern with a banner of roses. Both are made by "Becker Page & Smith of Phila[delphia]," which was in business between 1875-1920.⁵ The wallpaper is consistent on the first and second floors.

Besides wall coverings, paint colors are discernable in some exposed places, particularly on the tongue-and-groove ceiling and wallboards, on the ogee cornice, and on the baseboards. White paint is evident as the main color on the primary substrata of the ceiling boards, and may be an either a primer or calcimine paint, also known as milk paint. A bright turquoise-like blue color is best seen in a storage room (Room 104). This appears to be Prussian blue, an historic paint often seen in 1860s buildings (see **Photo 18**).⁶ A third color on trim and baseboards is an olive-looking green, which may be a historic color.

No historic light fixtures exist in the hotel, and the current lighting in the building varies from florescent lighting to single-bulbs attached to electrical fixtures. Private sinks are visible in three rooms of the second floor and may date to the 1880s (see **Photo 14**). In addition to sinks, 3-corner shelves are located in many of the rooms, across from the sinks.

⁵ Additional information was gleaned from the Cooper Hewitt collection that has some information online at <https://collection.cooperhewitt.org/departments/35347503/people/18046795/>.

⁶ Sara B. Chase. "Preservation Brief 28: Painting Historic Interiors." Washington D.C.: National Park Service, Technical Preservation Services. June 1992; Bonnie Wehle Parks. "Aurora Blue: Identifying and Analyzing Interior Paint in an Oregon Utopia, ca. 1870." *Cultural-Technical Booklet, Number Two*. Eugene, Oregon: University of Oregon, School of Architecture and Allied Arts, Historic Preservation Program. 1986.

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Hand-peeled logs, approximately 8 inches in diameter, support the hotel's rafters and notch into the top plate, visible in an unfinished section of the attic (see **Photo 16**). Horizontal collar ties, approximately 2x6 inch wide, attach the ties to the rafters with wrought iron nails. Old-growth wood skip sheathing is attached to the rafters. It is approximately 1-inch thick and 24 inches wide. Wood cedar shingles are evident under the zinc sheetmetal on its west slope, and modern standing seam sheetmetal on the east slope. On a side note, there are approximately six historic windows stored in the attic from replaced windows seen on the south and east elevations.

First Floor

The first floor of the Webber Lake Hotel is divided into eight rooms (see **Figure 6**):

- A main communal room (Room 101) off the south (front) elevation porch;
- A hallway (Room 106) connects the room on the west side of the hotel on a north-south axis;
- Individual rooms (Room 103, Room 104, Room 105, Room 107, and Room 108) lined the east wall, believed to be bedrooms for patrons or service rooms historically for the hotel; and
- Rooms currently are repurposed as a kitchen (Room 102), storage spaces (Room 103, Room 104, Room 105, and Room 108), and a workshop (Room 107).

Communal Room (Room 101)

Communal Room (Room 101) is on the south (front) porch (see **Figure 6**). The walls of the room are lined with beaded 4-inch wide, tongue-and-groove boards, set vertically, and attached to original log walls (see **Photo 9**). Approximately 6-inch wide baseboards connect with the linoleum floor, which covers original wood floorboards. The ceiling, like the walls, is lined with beaded tongue-and-groove, 4-inch wide boards. An ogee cornice molding is evident along the ceiling.

The room has two windows each on the west, south, and east walls, and all of the windows are 6/6 wood sash windows that have a subtle curved lintel, except the southeast corner window which is a 2/2 wood sash window (see **Photo 9**). Shelves are located on the west wall in original 1860s window openings (see **Photo 10**). Two original 4-panel, single leaf doors are on the north wall and one leads out the south (front) elevation and the other to the kitchen (Room 102). The doors swing on vintage iron pintle hinges, which support their weight. Simple wood trim surrounds the doors and windows, traditional to the 1860s. The room has a brick chimney flue for a wood stove, located on the north wall.

Kitchen (Room 102) and Storage Room (Room 103)

The kitchen (Room 102) is a modernized kitchen, added post-1960s, and has wood cabinets and appliances, such as a refrigerator and stove that are non-historic. Behind the cabinets, the room is lined with approximately 4-inch wide tongue-and-groove boards, set vertically. The communal room (Room 101) and kitchen are separated by a 2-inch-wide partition wall that has a door opening that had been removed. The kitchen has a sash window that is covered at the base by plywood cabinets and a porcelain sink that are non-historic. Linoleum covers the original wood floorboards.

Parallel to the kitchen, a door connects to a storage room (Room 103). It is believed to have been a bedroom because it has a three-corner shelf, like those found in many of the hotel's bedrooms. The room has a 5-panel c. 1920s door in a newer frame inserted into an original jamb with iron pintle hinges (see **Photo 17**). It also has a 6/6 wood sash window and its historic wallpaper and border. Shelves are located on the north wall for canned goods.

Storage Room (Room 104) and Closet (Room 105)

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Storage room (Room 104) is connected to a closet (Room 105), which is not accessible. The room was a bedroom and modified to make room for utilities that are located under the floor. The storage room is a small space that is lifted approximately 1 foot above the floor level of the hallway (Room 106). A 1-foot square door is located in the floorboards of the room and is labeled "drain." It is believed to be floor drain for the kitchen and bathrooms, which have non-historic PVC pipes.

The room had an original 6/6 wood sash window, which is missing, and the room retains its historic 4-panel wood door set on an iron pintle hinge. The most interesting element in the room is an opening to the floor joists, which exposes Prussian blue paint that dates to the 1860s (see **Photo 18**). The paint is on an ogee cornice piece and vertical wallboards. The floor joists run through the room (see **Photo 18**).

Hallway (Room 106)

The hallway (Room 106) is the main corridor on the first floor. It runs along the west wall and jogs at the end into a storage room (Room 108) and north wall (see **Photo 11**). Wood sash windows line the west wall, protected by wood shutters on the exterior. The original windows are intact, in fair condition, and missing some glass panes. The hall's floorboards are set on a north-south axis, and are buckled due to the hotel's shifting over the last 100 years (see **Photo 11**). The baseboards, approximately 8-inch wide, line the west wall and have an ogee detail on top; the baseboard on the east wall is a simple 1-foot wide wood board. As seen in other rooms, the walls in the hallway are lined with now severely faded muslin-lined wallpaper. A wood panel duct-like feature runs along the wall and is believed to encase water pipes that serve as a plumbing outlet for a shower or bathroom (Room 212) located on the second floor. A window is located on the corner and retains its original mutins. At the back of the hallway is a 5-panel double door that leads out of the north elevation.

Workshop (Room 107) and Storage Room (Room 108)

The workshop (Room 107) is a large area that historically was three separate guest bedrooms. It is now utilized as a maintenance/workshop space (see **Photo 12**). A small 3-corner shelf is located in the room's southwest corner, and is evidence the space was once a bedroom. Partition or wood framed walls were removed to produce the large space. The floor in the workshop is a poured concrete pad, added post-1950, and has large settlement cracks. The room has two 6/6 wood sash windows, and the bottom sash is covered on the east wall by a workbench; one of these windows historically was a door (see **Figure 11**). Besides windows, the workshop has a wide doorway with a hollow-core door where the hotel's original log construction is exposed (see **Photo 12**).

The walls in the room are lined with rose-printed "Becker Smith & Page Inc." muslin wallpaper, which is also seen in other rooms in the building. A historic 3-cornered shelf is located in the southeast corner of the room. The trim and baseboards are painted olive green, which is seen in other rooms on this floor. This paint is visible on missing partition walls on the west side of the room. All the lighting fixtures hang from the dropped ceiling.

At the far northwest corner is a storage room (Room 108) appears to be cut out of workshop (Room 107). More investigation is needed to understand if this space had an historical function for the hotel. The stud-framed unfinished walls that divide the storage room and workshop are non-historic, whereas the ceiling is original, and it has the same olive green paint seen in the workshop and throughout this floor.

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Second Floor

The second floor of the Webber Lake Hotel is divided into twelve rooms (see **Figure 6**):

- A central hallway partitioned into three spaces (Room 201, Room 205, Room 206) and includes a small triangular closet (Room 202) and shower (Room 212);
- A living room (Room 203) is off the hallway (Room 201) and has a bathroom (Room 204); and
- Storage rooms/ hotel bedrooms (Room 207, Room 208, Room 209, Room 210, and Room 211) are intact on the north end.

Hallway (Room 201, Room 205, and Room 206), Closet (Room 202), and Shower (Room 212)

The hallway, which runs parallel with the first-floor hallway (Room 106), is divided into three separate spaces (Room 201, Room 205, and Room 206) partitioned by walls and doors (see **Figure 6**). Access to this space is from a staircase on the west elevation that leads to the south (front) elevation porch.

On the south (front) hallway, a historic 4-panel wood door on the corner is from the porch and two panels of the door have been replaced with glass panes. Three original 6/6 wood sash windows light the front hallway (Room 201) (see **Photo 13**). Finished T-111 paneling conceals possible historic finishes in this space. Square acoustic tiles cover the historic ceiling as a drop ceiling. The space curves around a living room (Room 203) and two doors lead off the front hallway to this living unit. The staircase to the attic is off Room 201. A staircase leads from the hallway up to the attic space (Room 303), which is boxed out into this front hall. A triangular-shaped closet (Room 202) features an historic 4-panel wood door that has been cut in half. This closet is marked in pencil with the words “Webber Lake Club Cal.” on one of its boards. It is believed to have been built under the stairs during the ownership of the hotel in the 1910s.

The middle hallway (Room 205) is small and is covered with non-historic materials. An historic window opening is located on the west wall in this space and is paneled on the exterior. Two non-historic hollow core doors open in and off the middle hall. The north (end) hallway (Room 206) is unfinished and is lined with muslin. An historic olive-colored baseboard lines the east wall of the hallway and the historic floorboards. Five original doorways lead off the hallway to individual bedrooms (Room 207, Room 208, Room 209, Room 210, and Room 211). There are three windows on the west wall, however they are shuttered and there are no lights in the hallway, making it challenging to see. A c.1900 5-panel door is on the far northwest corner and it once lead to a set of stairs on the west elevation that have since been removed. A shower or bathroom (Room 212) is located at the rear of the hallway (Room 206) and has a 3-lite transom window above the door.

Living Room (Room 203) and Bathroom (Room 204)

In this small apartment unit is a living room (Room 203) that has a dropped ceiling to accommodate florescent lights and possibly an HVAC system. The most character-defining feature in this space is a 4-panel wood door with two of its panels replaced with glass on the room’s east wall. The door leading from the hallway (Room 201) has a 4-panel door with side lites and a transom. It is believed this door might have been located on the west elevation, which is the same dimension as the door opening located off the hallway (Room 106). A second historic 4-panel door is off the room and goes into hallway (Room 201); this door has a pet door cut out of its base. Two windows are located on the south wall of the room that has been replaced with double-pane vinyl windows

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that were probably added within the past 10 years. From historic photos, the western window on the wall was a door, added post-1950s (see **Figures 11-15**). Historic 6/6 sash wood windows with wood pegs at the corners are located on the room's east wall. In addition, the room has a modernized kitchen on the north (rear) wall, and an historic window opening that was remodeled with a sliding glass vinyl window above a sink. A wood-burning stove is located in this room for heat.

A bathroom (Room 204) off the living room is equipped with a laundry room as well as pantry/closet. The bathroom has a vinyl sliding glass window in an historic window opening, and has two historic corner sinks incorporated into one. A cast-iron footed tub is set on a 1-foot platform. The tub as well as the sinks was moved into the hotel within the past 30 years from the adjacent c.1900 Bohemian Fly Caster's Club Apartments, west of the hotel.⁷

Bedrooms (Room 207, Room 208, Room 209, Room 210, and Room 211)

Many of the historic bedrooms on this second floor are used as storage but retain much of their historic fabric. Each room has a historic 6/6 wood sash window on the east wall, and three windows boarded up on the exterior (see **Figure 6**). Half windows, or top sash windows, are located in two rooms (Room 211 and Room 210). Many of these rooms retain their 3-cornered shelves, and one bedroom (Room 209) has its original corner sink (see **Photo 14**). One of the bedrooms (Room 207) is used as wood storage for the wood-burning stove in the living room (Room 203). A second bedroom (Room 210) retains its original 6/6 wood sash window. All of the doors off these bedrooms have original 4-panel wood doors from the 1860s (see **Photo 15**). A room on the end (Room 211) has a wood workbench on the north wall.

Attic

The attic has eight rooms, and connects to the second floor by way of a staircase from the hallway (Room 201) to a second hallway (Room 303) that joins three bedrooms (Room 301, Room 304, and Room 306) (see **Figure 6**). Although the southern end of the attic is finished with newer materials, the northern end of the building is unfinished, exposing original rafters and wood skip sheathing. Gypsum sheetrock covers the stud-framed partition walls and clads all the interior walls of the attic. Two 1/1-sash vinyl windows are on the gable ends that replaced 6/6 wood sash windows, seen in historic photographs (see **Photo 16, Figure 18**). All the doors on this floor are hollow-core doors, and other modern materials are seen in the finished areas, such as acoustic tiles, plywood, and sheetrock that encapsulates original finishes in two-thirds of the attic. The attic portion unfinished (Room 307) and provides a peek into the hotel's construction. It is speculated the attic historically was an unfinished space, and may have been used as storage or sleeping quarters for the hotel establishment that accommodated 75-100 people during its heyday.

Bedroom (Room 301) and Closet (Room 302)

A bedroom (Room 305) and a walk-in closet (Room 302) are located south of the hallway (Room 303). A wood stove is located in the space, set on a raised base. A closet is boxed out into the bedroom. The bedroom has a 1/1-vinyl double-pane window on the south wall, which originally was a 6/6 wood sash window (see **Figure 6**). A hollow core wood door is located on the north elevation of the room.

Bedrooms (Room 304 and Room 306) and Bathroom (Room 305)

⁷ Michelle Schmitter. "Personal email with Architectural Historian Corri Jimenez," August 10, 2017.

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North of the hallway (Room 303) there were two bedrooms (Room 304 and Room 306) connected by a bathroom (Room 305) (see **Figure 6**). The bathroom is a modernized bathroom, added in the past 20 years. Like other bedrooms in the attic, gypsum sheetrock finishes the walls. Hollow core wood doors connect the rooms, and one door leads to an unfinished attic space (Room 307).

Attic Space (Room 307)

The rafters are peeled logs, approximately 6-inches in diameter and are tapered at the ridge (see **Figure 6, Photo 16**). Collar ties connect the rafters in the middle and fastened with forged wrought iron nails. Skip sheathing is visible on the rafters and are 1-inch wide but vary from 18 inches to 24 inches in width. These timbers represent old-growth lumber. Square cut nail ends are apparent in this space, adhering the original wood shingles. The floorboards are historic, tongue-and-groove planks that were milled to be at least 24 inches wide. A stovepipe hole is evident in the roof and visible in the floorboards as well.

Setting/Landscape

The Webber Lake Hotel is situated on its original 1860 site at the north end of its namesake Webber Lake off Jackson Meadows Road, a Tahoe National Forest road off State Route 89. The building is set on a historic section of Henness Pass Road, built in 1849, which is aligned on 1840s emigrant trail sections (see **Figure 9**). Settled by Dr. D.G. Webber as early as 1854, the hotel is set in a picturesque landscape, back-dropped with snowcapped mountains, such as scenic Webber Peak, located at an elevation of 8,093 feet. Natural elements surround the hotel that include its most significant feature, Webber Lake, sustaining Coppins, Jackson, and Perazzo Meadows, which filters waters from the Little Truckee River. The hotel is approximately 50 feet from the shoreline of beautiful alpine lake and is surrounded by lodge pole or tamarack pine trees (*Pinus contorta*).

The 2-½ story log-constructed hotel is the centerpiece of a possible historic district surrounded by a variety of period buildings. These structures date from the 1850s into the 1960s, and touch a wide range of historic contexts significant to Sierra County. Webber's Station, east of the hotel, was built possibly in the early-1850s and is directly associated with Henness Pass Road as a toll road. Webber's Station and the hotel are two of a handful of buildings that are recorded to have been built by Dr. D.G. Webber from 1854-1863. West of the hotel, the Bohemian Fly Caster Club Apartments is in the potential historic district. It is a two-story wood building built c.1900, which was possibly a stable prior to being an apartment building. Other buildings on the outskirts of the Webber Lake Hotel are small, recreational cabins moved to Webber Lake from the 1930s Hobart Mills, located 19 miles south of the hotel off State Route Highway 89. In addition to these other types of historic buildings, the Johnsons built some buildings between the 1930s-1960s, as well as established campsites. Currently, the setting is part of the Webber Lake Resort, operated by the Truckee Donner Land Trust, the present owners of the property.

Alterations

The Webber Lake Hotel is set in a rural area that has been in private hands since the 1850s and it has had little modifications in its over 150 years. Four wood sash windows have been replaced on the south and east elevations as well as two windows in the gable ends with vinyl windows; all the windows are stored in the attic and can potentially be reinstalled in the openings. In addition to windows, a staircase was added on the west elevation as access to the second floor, which is

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reversible. Subtle changes have occurred on the front porch in rebuilding it with some of the same elements, however, is missing some of its classically designed details best seen in historic images pre-1950 on its front porch. Besides the exterior changes, a few interior walls have been removed in converted into larger spaces (Room 107, Room 203, and Rooms 301-306) (see **Figure 6**).

Historic Integrity

In order for the Webber Lake Hotel to be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places, the property must retain its seven aspects of integrity (*location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association*). The Webber Lake Hotel retains all of its integrity and has a period of significance from 1860 to 1883.

The Webber Lake Hotel is situated on its original *location* on Webber Lake, facing Webber Peak and on Henness Pass Road, which was blazed by Patrick Henness as early as 1849 as a toll road across the Sierra Nevada Mountains. The *setting* of Webber Lake Hotel has changed little since its original construction in 1860. Overlooking Webber Lake, the hotel is surrounded by picturesque mountains, such as the 8,093-foot-high Webber Peak, set in a lodge pole pine and Douglas fir forest. The hotel has a rich *association* to Henness Pass Road, Dr. D.G. Webber, and as a recreational site in the Sierra Nevada. Henness Pass Road is a significant roadway that predates the railroad, and several hotels and stage stops were located on the road for travelers and emigrants. It was one of the main routes over the mountains connecting Marysville, California, to the gold fields of the Comstock Mining District in present-day Nevada. In addition, Dr. D.G. Webber was a pioneer to Sierra County, a local prominent physician, and a builder of both the 1854 Sierra County Courthouse and 1860 Webber Lake Hotel. The hotel is the best representative of Webber and a stage stop, promoted as recreational tourist spot. The Webber Lake Hotel retains its original *feeling* and sense of place from its classical architectural elements and breathtaking setting that embraces a visitor.

The Webber Lake Hotel maintains its original *design* as a 2 ½-story, log-constructed building has subtle architectural details, such a Greek Revival style front porch and Egyptian Revival door surround. The hotel's design includes approximately 14 hotel rooms off a north-south axis hallway. The hotel maintains all of its period exterior *materials* including original horizontal wood weatherboards, fastened to a log frame with square nails, and 6/6 wood sash windows with wood pegs, and 4-panel wood doors hung on iron pintles. The Webber Lake Hotel's interior is intact, and includes original 1880s wallpaper, paints, and wood trim boards. Although a few windows have been replaced and walls removed, the majority of the hotel's *materials* are retained. The Webber Lake Hotel's *workmanship* is predominantly built with vernacular building techniques as a two-story hand-hewn, log-constructed building. Some changes have transpired but most of the hotel's workmanship is legible or encapsulated under newer materials.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

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- 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 of 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

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance

Recreation

Transportation

Architecture

Period of Significance

1860-1883

Significant Dates

Significant Person

Dr. David Gould Webber

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Dr. David Gould Webber

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

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The Webber Lake Hotel (1860) is nominated for its local significance associated with Henness Pass Road (1849-1868), one of the major thoroughfares over the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Blazed by Patrick Henness, the roadway connected Marysville to the gold and silver mines in the Comstock Mining District in Virginia City, Nevada. A handful of trails were constructed in the late-1840s across the mountainous range, but Henness Pass Road was the most successful route and thousands of people migrated between California's Gold Country and Nevada's Comstock Mining District. The hotel was one of approximately thirty establishments on Henness Pass Road that provided provisions for travelers and emigrants, and the Webber Lake Hotel is believed to be the oldest standing stage stop as a hotel on the road (Criterion A).

The Webber Lake Hotel is a 2 ½-story, vernacular constructed hotel with some subtle architectural details, which is considered to be the oldest log building on Henness Pass Road. The hotel was built in 1860 by Dr. D.G. Webber and promoted as a recreational retreat for hunters and anglers as well as for emigrants traveling on Henness Pass Road. California and Nevada newspapers published hundreds of events that happened at the hotel and advertised stage routes that transported visitors to the recreational resort from Truckee. In addition to state newspapers, recreational guidebooks promoted the Webber Lake hotel to a broader audience, and were contemporary to Webber's management of his hotel. After Webber's death in 1883, subsequent property owners sustained his energy in galvanizing the lake and hotel as a prominent recreational retreat for sportsmen (Criterion A).

Dr. David Gould Webber (1809-1883) was one of Sierra County's earliest pioneers who constructed the county's first courthouse and bridge, as well as built, managed, and operated the Webber Lake Hotel on Henness Pass Road. Prominent individuals, such as biologist J.G. Lemmon and reporter J. Ross Browne, praised Webber for his kindness to all visitors to his well-known namesake Webber Lake. Webber was locally important to Sierra County as a miner, physician, builder, entrepreneur, and resident of Sierra Valley for over thirty years, and the Webber Lake Hotel is the best representative of his life in the county (Criterion B).

The Webber Lake Hotel is being nominated for its significance to the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and B.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Criterion A: Transportation

Early History and Emigrant Travel

Fur trapper and explorer Jedidiah S. Smith was recorded as the first Anglo-European to visit the Sierra Valley area.⁸ Smith's mission was to scout trapping locations in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, allowing other American and European hunters to follow. By the early 1830s, the fur trapping industry demonstrated signs of fading nationally, and travel to the valley did not surge until the 1840s and western expansion into California.

The California Gold Rush spurred hundreds of thousands of adventure seekers into the Sierra Nevada Mountains and propelled California as the 31st state in the Union by September 9, 1850. Mountain man James Beckwourth plotted a pass for emigrants in covered wagons crossing the

⁸ Joanne Meschery. *Truckee*. Truckee, California: Rocking Stone Press, 1978:15.

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West near present-day Chilcoot in the Sierra Valley in 1851.⁹ In the southeast corner of the valley, A.P. Chapman was one of the first homesteaders in 1851. The movement he began brought additional settlers, triggering Sierra County's formation from part of Yuba County in 1852 and the establishment of the town of Downieville as the county seat.¹⁰ Dr. David Gould (D.G.) Webber was one such pioneer who began purchasing land on Webber Lake as early as 1852, and built a "ranch" on the lake as early as 1854.

History of Henness Pass Road

The significance of Henness Pass Road encompasses several different contexts including overland emigration on the California Trail (1845-1848), the California Gold Rush (1849-1880), and connection to the Comstock Mining District (1859-1877). Additionally, the road is noteworthy to its own cultural context that stretches from 1845 to 1868.¹¹ In the 1850s before the construction of the railroads over the Sierra Nevada Mountains, there were three main emigrant routes were built in Northern California as passes for the diverse travelers going both west and east. These routes were the Beckwourth Trail through Plumas, Sierra, and Butte Counties; the Carson-Placerville Trail along present-day U.S. Highway 50; and Henness Pass Road, which was set on segments of the Truckee River Route of the 1840s California Overland Trail (see **Figure 9**).¹²

Geographically, Henness Pass Road connected the communities of Marysville, Camptonville, and Downieville in western Sierra County. The road travels east to drop down into the Sierra, Sardine, and Dog Valleys before turning south towards the town of Verdi, Nevada. It then proceeded through the great basin towards the hills of the Comstock Mining District in Virginia City, Nevada. Henness Pass Road was an approximately 128-mile road and had supportive routes that extended to other mining communities, like Nevada City and Grass Valley, and served as the main route to gold fields scattered all over the western and eastern slopes of the Sierra Nevada mountains.

Blazed by Patrick Henness in early 1849, Henness Pass Road is believed to have been set on an early Native American trail or possibly blazed by Downieville founder Joseph Zumwalt, one of the area's first pioneers familiar with the Truckee River Route of the California Overland Trail.¹³ An early account of the Henness Pass Road route was posted in the *Daily Alta California* on August 4, 1854:

There were three routes from the Truckee Meadows to the Sacramento Valley—Beckwith [sic] route, by way of the American Valley and the City of '76; the Truckee route by way of Nevada, and the Downieville, or Hennis [sic] route, coming in at Galloway's Ranch, on the divide between the South and Middle Yubas. The distance from the big meadows on the Truckee, Downieville,

⁹ Warren A. Beck and Ynez D. Haase, *Historical Atlas of California*. Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1974:42.

¹⁰ H.E. Rensch, E.G. Rensch, and Mildred Brooke Hoover. *Historic Spots in California: Valley and Sierra Counties*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1933:389.

¹¹ Donald L. Hardesty, and Barbara J. Little in *Assessing Site Significance: A Guide for Archaeologists and Historians*. Second Edition. New York: Alta Mira Press, 2009:112; Corri Lyn Jimenez. "Bodie, California: Understanding the Architecture and Built Environment of a Gold Mining Town." Master's Thesis in the University of Oregon's Historic Preservation Program. Eugene: University of Oregon, June 2000.

¹² Marshall Fey, *Emigrant Trails: The Long Road to California, a History and Guide to the Emigrant Routes from Central Nevada to the Crossing of the Sierra with the end of the Trail for the Donner Party*, Reno: Western Trails Research Association, 2002:87.

¹³ Doug Barrett. "Henness Pass the most used route." My Place in the Sun series, *Sierra Sun-Bonanza*, January 24, 1975; Sierra College, "Henness Pass Trail," March 28, 2015.

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is about sixty-five miles. Webber's Ranch, Webber Lake, the source of the Little Truckee, is the only stopping place on the route.¹⁴

This 1854 account not only documents Henness Pass Road from "Truckee Meadows," also known as Reno, to the Sacramento area; but it also cites "Webber's Ranch" as the "only stopping place on the route." This is the first account of a building at Webber Lake. In the following year, Henness Pass Road was made official. D.B. Scott, an engineer for the Marysville & San Francisco Railroad, surveyed the route as "a more direct and better route by which to reach the Sacramento Valley."¹⁵ The road was certified as a California State Wagon Road and the chosen pass over other routes in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, providing safe travel as a privately owned and paved road.¹⁶ Besides paving, bridges over waterways were built, like the Bridgeport Covered Bridge (1862) over the South Fork of the Yuba River in Nevada County, which endorsed the road as a safer route for travelers.¹⁷

This state certification and favoritism to Henness Pass Road brought public attention, and approximately 20 businessmen from Yuba, Sierra, and Nevada Counties formed and invested in the Truckee Turnpike Company in maintaining the road as a toll road.¹⁸ On November 24, 1859, the San Francisco Stock Market showed enthusiasm for the Truckee Turnpike Company and invested \$30,000 within a 24-hour period, the equivalent today of about \$900,000.¹⁹ The investment established Henness Pass Road as a good road for companies, connecting the eastern and western slopes of the Sierra Nevada. John W. Simonton of the *San Francisco Bulletin* accounts:

The Truckee Turnpike claimed that an ordinary freighting team can haul at least 3,000 pounds more per trip via the Henness Pass Road via Strawberry Valley; and I should judge their estimates not at all exaggerated. Certainly they have given us the best mountain road I ever saw in any county. It is abundantly supplied with good bridges, avoids low, swampy grounds, and eschews the mud-holes. Its grade are all well enough for the passage of teams going in opposite directions, and their most difficult points involve an ascent of only 16 inches to the rod [sic] in going west.

By the fall of 1860, Henness Pass Road was open to travel.²⁰ Express companies, such as Wells Fargo, Pacific Union Express Company, and Langston's Pioneer Express, used the pass regularly and freight wagons aside stagecoaches and thousands of other individuals.²¹ Distinguished *Harpers Weekly* reporter J. Ross Browne favored Henness Pass Road over other passes in the area complimenting, "the stopping places are good and conveniently situated...the scenery is not so

¹⁴ *Daily Alta California* "From the Humboldt," August 4, 1854.

¹⁵ *Sierra Sun-Bonanza*, "Webber Lake Couple finally discover summer," July 7, 1983.

¹⁶ Sierra College, "Henness Pass Trail," 2015; Rensch, Rensch, and Hoover, *Historic Spots in California: Valley and Sierra Counties*, 1933:216.

¹⁷ Rensch, Rensch, and Hoover. *Historic Spots in California: Valley and Sierra Counties*, 216.

¹⁸ *Daily Appeal*. "Transportation Roads," June 8, 1860.

¹⁹ Manuel, *Inflation Calculator*. 2015.

²⁰ Leslie Fryman, M.A., Dayna Giambastiani, M.A., and Kari Sprengeler, B.A. "A Cultural Resources Inventory of 600 Acres at Independence Lake, Sierra and Nevada Counties, California," May 2012.

²¹ Barrett, "Henness Pass the most used route," *Sierra Sun-Bonanza*, 1975.

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good perhaps, as on the other route [like the Carson-Placerville Route], but it is nevertheless very beautiful—especially as you approach the head waters of the Little Truckee.”²²

Prior to railroads across the Sierra Nevada Mountains, freight was hauled up the Sacramento, Feather, and Lower Yuba Rivers where it was unloaded at Marysville in Yuba County or at Knights Landing in Yolo County. From there, stagecoaches and freight wagons lead by 8-mule wagon teams traversed the pass to California gold mining towns in Nevada City, Sierra City, and San Juan to the east side of the mountain range in Nevada. Passengers could catch a stagecoach at 6:30 a.m. every morning in Sacramento, which would take them on the 30-hour ride to Virginia City’s Comstock Mining District; stage stops and toll houses were set up along Henness Pass Road for travelers on the rough, long journey. During its heyday in the 1860s, traffic was so heavy that passenger-filled stagecoaches ran at night while freight wagons ran during the day. Approximately 100 wagons per day are estimated to have traveled the pass. Brown recalled the congestion on Henness Pass Road vividly:

At calculation we must have passed 2 or 3 hundred teams. Every wagon was heavily freighted, some with merchandise, others with iron castings for the mills, and quite a goodly number with families, fruit, whiskey, and furniture. There were horse teams and mule teams, and ox teams. I never before saw so many teams on one road, no wonder the dust was so deep!²³

In addition to traffic, tragedy was prevalent on the road. One incident occurred on November 17, 1867 when two “Chinamen” were overcome in a rainstorm on Henness Pass Road and one perished at the road and the second was found nearly dead in a barn adjacent the Webber Lake Hotel.²⁴ It is said that Dr. Webber treated the man’s wounds.

Stations, Stage Stops, and Inns of Henness Pass Road

Along the 128-mile meandering Henness Pass Road, numerous amenities were set up for travelers. There were hotels or inns, stage stops, and stations. Sections of the roadway were toll roads and were maintained by toll collectors. Where there were no cities or towns between long stretches of the road, stations were set up as rural stage stops, providing travelers with rest and possibly telegraph communication.

Twenty-one stops are known to have existed on Henness Pass Road, which excludes random homesteads that may have been providing services; therefore, it is speculated there may have been as many as thirty stops on the route.²⁵ The stops on the western portion include: Camptonville (1852), Sleighville House (1849), Negro Tent (unknown), Mountain House (1860), Forest City (1852), Florida House (1850s), Fred’s Ranch (unknown), Cornish House (1861), Middlewaters (1860s), Milton’s Ranch (1861), Jackson’s Ranch (1852), and Bassett’s Station (1865). The eastern portion stops include: Moore/Davis Station (1860), Kyburz (1849), Junction House (1865), Webber Station/Hotel (1860), Sardine House (1865), 620 Stage Stop (1860s), First Summit (1845; 1860s), O’Neil’s Station (1860), and More’s Station (1860s). These stops provided comfort,

²² Doug Barrett, “Early recollections of Webber Lake,” My Place in the Sun series, *Sierra Sun-Bonanza*, August 6, 1976. Note, Browne’s work in *A Peep at Washoe* (1860) and *Washoe Revisited* (1863) both account his travels on the Carson-Placerville trail, as well as how treacherous the route was for Washoites going to Virginia City.

²³ Tahoe National Forest. “Henness Pass Road,” Plaque displayed at More’s Station, Tahoe National Forest.

²⁴ *Marysville Daily Appeal*, “Sierra County,” November 17, 1867:119.

²⁵ U.S. Forest Service. “Henness Pass Road Driving Tour.” Published by Sierraville Ranger District, Tahoe National Forest. Accessed May 9, 2018. https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fseprd551462.pdf.

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accommodations, and provisions for long-distance travelers that included prairie schooners, stagecoaches, and freight wagons. Many of these places provided a variety of services, such as supplying livestock, blacksmithing and wagon maintenance, toll collection, lodging and dining, as well as office space for stage/freight companies.²⁶ Some of the stops were significant in size, as small communities. For example, the stage stop at Mountain House had a three-story roadhouse with 16 lodging rooms, dining hall, dance hall, bar, post office, and telegraph station, plus had barns and stables for stage companies.²⁷ Other stops not only served travelers on Henness Pass Road, but also operated as “nature resorts” for those that wished to stay longer, enjoy the environment, and take on a little relax and recreation fishing and hunting. Research indicates the Webber Lake was equipped with many of these accommodations and entertained a diversity of travelers.

Webber’s Station, adjacent to the 1860 Webber Lake Hotel, still stands, and it is believed to pre-date the hotel (see **Photo 1**). Although it is unknown how many stops were formally located along Henness Pass Road, the county assessor books recorded many, such as Merrill’s Station, Chamberlain’s Station, and Warner’s Station.²⁸ Bassett’s Station, established in 1865, on State Route 49 is an old Henness Pass Road station that appears to have been significantly altered, whereas other stations are merely archaeological sites, such as Mountain House, Sleighville House, and More’s Station. The Webber Lake Hotel and its adjacent way station is believed to be the last pair of intact stops associated with Henness Pass Road that dates to its heyday.

Decline of Henness Pass Road

In 1863, the Central Pacific Railroad (CPRR) laid its first track in Sacramento heading east and by 1866, established the railroad stop of Coburn Station.²⁹ The railroad used the station as a supply hub, completed in 1868.³⁰ Coburn Station was renamed Truckee that year and became a major hub in the area in moving lumber out to mines in Nevada. By 1869, the CPRR met up with the Union Pacific Railroad in Provo, Utah, and put an end to heavy freight travel on Henness Pass Road.³¹ After the CPRR opened over Donner Pass, traffic significantly dwindled on Henness Pass Road and many stops were either abandoned or repurposed, such as Augustus Moore’s station on Independence Lake that was used as a recreational resort.³² An 1876 *Pacific Rural Press* article of the road ruminated of the early days, and accounts:

Famous before the advent of the railroad as the great road to Virginia City. Little now remains to show the immense amount of traffic which formerly passed over this road, except the ruined wayside houses which are scattered along at intervals of two or three miles. The road, although neglected, is in pretty fair condition for a mountain road, and has many points of interest.

²⁶ Hardesty and Little. *Assessing Site Significance*, 2009:114-115.

²⁷ E. Clampus Vitus, Major William Downie Chapter 1899. “Mountain House.” Dedicated May 13, 2000.

²⁸ Sierra County Assessor’s Office. “Assessor Book, Sierra Township,” 1869.

²⁹ Stephen E. Ambrose. *Nothing like it in the World: The Men Who Built the Transcontinental Railroad 1863-1869*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001.

³⁰ Meschery, *Truckee*, 1978:41; W.F. Edwards. *W.F. Edwards’ Tourists’ Guide and Directory of the Truckee Basin*. Truckee, CA: Republican Job Print, 1883:14.

³¹ Sierra College, “Henness Pass Trail,” 2015.

³² Fryman, Giambastiani and Sprengeler, “A Cultural Resources Inventory of 600 Acres at Independence Lake, Sierra and Nevada Counties, California,” 2012.

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In 1941, the Native Sons and Daughters of the Golden West placed a plaque on the road in Alleghany in Sierra County. The landmark's plaque reads, "THE MAIN EMIGRANT TRAIL BETWEEN VIRGINIA CITY, NEVADA AND MARYSVILLE, CALIFORNIA, THE HENNESS PASS ROAD WAS IN USE AS EARLY AS 1849. AT THAT TIME, THIS WAS THE ONLY ROAD THROUGH THE HENNESS PASS." Currently, Henness Pass is listed as a California State Landmark (No. 421).

Criterion A: Entertainment/Recreation

Webber Hotel as a Hunting and Fishing Resort

Lakeside resorts first appeared in the Sierra Nevada Mountains in the 1850s into the 1860s and were set on roadways. It is speculated there were thirty stage stops along Henness Pass Road, and the Webber Lake Hotel is considered one of the earliest surviving ones. The hotel was built and promoted by Dr. D.G. Webber as an elegant stage stop as well as a recreational resort. Today, it represents the best example of Webber's life and contribution as a pioneer to Sierra County.

During the Henness Pass Road's heyday, the 2 ½-story, log-constructed Webber Lake Hotel had patronage by everyone from emigrants going west, to gold miners going south to the Meadow Lake Mining District, or east to the Comstock Mining District in Virginia City, Nevada. It has been estimated that around 75-100 people at any given time stayed at the resort, excluding those who camped along Webber Lake's shoreline and in the nearby meadows. The hotel and its setting was a serene place for visitors and provided temporary living and long-term lodging for many visitors there to enjoy its recreational benefits. Reporter J. Ross Browne wrote an extensive article in 1863 for the *San Francisco Evening Bulletin* as part of his *Washoe Revisited* series and predicted the hotel would be a "famous resort before long."³³ Browne recorded the hotel as a "large and commodious house" on the shore of the lake for the "entertainment of visitors."³⁴ Browne's accounts continued,

I spent a very pleasant evening listening to his account of his explorations...there is not perhaps in the whole range of the Sierra Nevadas [sic], a more lovely sheet of water...Lying almost at the summit amid forests of spruce and pine, it seems to nestle in the solitude, enamored of its own mirrored beauties. Rugged mountains encircle it in the distance. Close down, its shores are beautifully sloping and covered with groves of pine, birch, mountain ash and wild plum trees.

An article on August 10, 1872 in the *Pacific Rural Press* records, a party lead by Jim Orndorff arrived at Webber Lake and relays a first-person account of the hotel:

They found the proprietor, Dr. Webber, at home. His hotel furnishes excellent accommodations for about seventy-five people. The boys caught trout to their hearts content with line, trolling hooks and spears. The climate of the lake was unusually fine. The air cool and bracing, rendering a fire necessary after sunset and two or three pairs of blankets very acceptable. The woods surrounding the lake are full of game, including quail, grouse, deer and bear...The hotel is crowded with people from all parts of the world, who manage to enjoy themselves immensely with fishing, hunting, picnicking, etc. A large number are camping out. The scenery is unsurpassed, the lake being surrounded by mountains covered with snow.

³³ Doug Barrett, "Early recollections of Webber Lake." My Place in the Sun series, *Sierra Sun-Bonanza*, 1976.

³⁴ Ibid.

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This historical account beautifully describes the setting and its accommodations, which includes how many people the Webber Lake Hotel accommodated as well as what people enjoyed while staying there.

Mary Anderson, Webber's foster daughter, managed the resort in the 1880s aside her husband A.J. Anderson, as well managed the Tahoe Hot Springs Hotel on Brockway in Truckee (see **Figure 11**). A Truckee newspaper cited Mrs. Anderson as, "an excellent landlady...as all will attest who visit Webber Lake while she had charge there...the Hot Springs Hotel will soon regain its former popularity."³⁵ Webber and Mary Anderson entered into a legal dispute over the ownership of the Webber Hotel in 1882 after her husband died. This involved the Webber Lake Hotel's furniture that was moved to her hotel in Truckee.³⁶ Webber sued Mary for personal property that belonged at Webber Lake Hotel "in settling the affairs of the widow."³⁷

Webber Lake in California and Nevada Newspapers

Webber Lake and its hotel were frequently cited in San Francisco, Sacramento, and Virginia City newspapers as early as 1854. Hunting and fishing were major outdoor activities at the lake, and Webber is known to have stocked "the lake with trout," from the Sierra Valley to the alpine lake.³⁸ In 1877, Webber is recorded to have stocked "silver sides" and "red flesh" trout in the lake for summer fishing for tourists, promoted in both Nevada and California newspapers.³⁹ In addition to Californians traveling to Webber Lake, Nevadans from as far as Virginia City frequented the area in partaking in the sports activity.

Mountain lions and California grizzly bear hunts were regular around the lake with visitors staying in the Webber Lake Hotel. In August 1879, they were advertised in Virginia City newspapers.⁴⁰ The "Sierra Valley Shooting Club" arranged a 6-day California grizzly bear hunt near Webber Lake on September 15, 1879, because the bears were "very numerous."⁴¹ The *Virginia Evening Chronicle* accounts:

Not far from the lake is the home of "Old Brin," the largest grizzly bear in America and "weighing about 2,000 pounds." Who weighed him last, however, is not stated. He was caught by Grizzly Dave at this ranch on the Henness Pass road in 1854 but tore the trap to pieces and made his escape. In case the bear is captured the Club propose having a grand barbecue, and if he isn't caught, they will use some less eminent member of the bear family.

That same year, the *Virginia Evening Chronicle* referenced an abundance of quail and grouse at Webber Lake and a large number of trout.⁴² The Nevada newspaper regularly promoted the fishing at the lake "for the convenience of lovers of field sports as any important town on the Pacific

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Doug Barrett. "Mrs. Anderson never gave up." My Place in the Sun series, *Sierra Sun-Bonanza*. December 28, 1973.

³⁷ Barrett. "Early recollection of Webber Lake," *Sierra Sun-Bonanza*, 1976.

³⁸ Fariss and Smith. *Illustrated History of Plumas, Lassen & Sierra Counties, with California from 1513 to 1850*. San Francisco: Fariss and Smith, 1882:267; William G. Copren, "Personal Communication with Architectural Historian Corri Jimenez," May 16, 2018.

³⁹ J.G. Lemmon, "Webber Lake and its Attractions," *Pacific Rural Press*, June 9, 1877.

⁴⁰ *Virginia Evening Chronicle*, "More Trouble Bruin. A Mighty bear hunt now organized," August 20, 1879.

⁴¹ "Ibid.

⁴² *Virginia Evening Chronicle*, "Quail, Grouse, and Fish." September 3, 1879.

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coast... a good team a day's drive in almost any direction will take the hunter or fisherman to some place where his inclination for sport may be amply gratified."⁴³

A number of tragedies occurred at Webber Lake including suicides and even murders. These were chronicled in both California and Nevada newspapers and supports evidence to the local significance of the Webber Lake Hotel. On August 23, 1879, the *Virginia Evening Chronicle* reported,

Miss Mallet, a young woman about 26 years of age, committed suicide by drowning herself in Webber Lake. She took a boat, rowed out to the middle of the lake and threw herself into the water. The act was witnessed from the shore... The body was recovered. The deceased had been a teacher at Danville, but for some weeks past she had been employed by Mr. and Mrs. Anderson at the lake. The causes which led to her to take her life are not known.⁴⁴

The most reported tragedy at Webber Lake happened on August 8, 1884. James O'Neill, a 19-year-old native of Ireland, worked at Webber's Ranch for dairyman John Woodward as a dairy hand.⁴⁵ One day, Woodward asked O'Neill to stay on until a replacement dairyman arrived.⁴⁶ The *Daily Alta California* accounts:

O'Neal [sic] went into the house and got a self-cocking pistol, and returning to the outside presented the pistol at Woodward's head, demanding his money at the same time. The pistol was discharged, Woodward being killed by a bullet, which went through his brain.⁴⁷

O'Neill fled and was captured on Henness Pass Road near Bowman Lake on September 14, 1884. He was convicted of first-degree murder on August 8, 1885 during a second trial.⁴⁸ The news of the murder captivated Nevada and California and was stated in multiple newspapers. The *Virginia Evening Chronicle* reported on October 22, 1885, that a "petition is being circulated for a commutation to imprisonment for life" for O'Neill. The petition failed to save his life, and O'Neill was hung on November 27, 1885 at 2:00p.m, which was the last hanging conviction in Sierra County.⁴⁹ The gallows in Downieville are a California State Historic Landmark (No. 971) and National Register historic property. Ironically, the structure was constructed adjacent to D.G. Webber's 1854 Sierra County Courthouse. A bronze historical plaque located near the wooden gallows reads:

ON NOVEMBER 27, 1885, 20 YEAR-OLD JAMES O'NEILL WAS HANGED FROM THIS GALLOWS FOR THE AUGUST 7, 1884 MURDER OF WEBBER LAKE DAIRYMAN JOHN WOODWARD, THAT EXECUTION, CONDUCTED BY SHERIFF SAMUEL C. STEWART APPROXIMATELY 100 FEET WEST OF THIS SITE WAS THE LAST LEGAL EXECUTION IN SIERRA COUNTY AND THE ONLY TIME THIS GALLOWS WAS USED. CHARGES IN STATE LAW IN 1891 ENDED LOCAL EXECUTIONS IN CALIFORNIA AND FURTHER

⁴³ *Virginia Evening Chronicle*, "More Trouble Bruin. A Mighty bear hunt now organized," August 20, 1879.

⁴⁴ *Virginia Evening Chronicle*, "Suicide at Webber Lake," August 23, 1879.

⁴⁵ Lee Adams III. "Sierra County Sherriff's Gallows (National Register nomination, No. 9000018)." February 14, 1990. Washington D.C.: National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places Program.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ *Daily Alta California*, "O'Neal hanged," December 4, 1885.

⁴⁸ Adams, "Sierra County Sherriff's Gallows," 1990; *Virginia Evening Chronicle*; "Untitled," September 14, 1884; *Virginia Evening Chronicle*, "Sentenced to be Hanged," October 22, 1885.

⁴⁹ Adams, "Sierra County Sherriff's Gallows," 1990.

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CHANGES IN 1941 ENDED HANGING AS A MEANS OF LEGAL EXECUTION WITHIN THE STATE.

Recreational guidebooks and Webber Lake

Pedestrian and freight traffic had significantly diminished on Henness Pass Road after 1868 with the construction of the Central Pacific Railroad and a depot in Truckee. In offsetting the lack of travel and commerce on Henness Pass Road, stagecoaches departed from the Truckee railroad station weekly every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday during the summer season the 40 miles to Webber Lake as early as 1868 (see **Figure 8** and **Figure 11**). The ticket price for the trip was \$3.50, which in today's standards equals \$70.00, and extra stages were supplemented in the 1880s that came as far as Eureka, Nevada City, Grass Valley, and Colfax to the lake.⁵⁰

With wagon and stage freight no longer traversing the road, Webber rebranded his lake and hotel as a "nature" resort as part of the national health movement that popularized scenery and rural vacations. Webber's friend, biologist J.G. Lemmon, wrote an extensive article on June 9, 1877 entitled, "Webber Lake and its Attractions," and published it in the *Pacific Rural Press* to motivate recreation and the Webber Lake Hotel in the Sierra Valley.⁵¹ In the center of the article was a "Rambling Sketch of Webber Lake" that illustrates buildings and boats set in a mountainous backdrop (see **Figure 10**). Lemmon wrote,

Of all the popular resorts found on these passes the highest and prettiest, and that which proves the most satisfactory because most beneficial and cheaply enjoyed, is the noted mountain gem of Webber lake...The fishing and hunting unexcelled, the climate cool and health-giving, the waters pure and delicious, added to all which the entertainment or medical assistance furnished by the proprietor, Dr. D. G. Webber, at his spacious hotel and sanitarium is of the most satisfactory kind, for he is a genial, efficient, liberal-hearted gentleman, and one of the most skillful, sympathetic, benevolent and successful physicians in California

Besides Lemmon's *Pacific Rural Press* article, numerous other recreational guidebooks promoted Webber Lake as a resort for relaxation and recreation in the form of fishing and hunting. One of the earliest guidebooks was Frederick E. Shearer's *The Pacific Tourist: an illustrated guide to the Pacific R.R California and pleasure resorts across the continent* (1879). Shearer accounts,

Webber Lake is one of the most popular resorts for trout fishing on the coast. The accommodations are excellent and the fish plentiful. It has perhaps no rival except the McCloud River and Castle Lake near Mount Shasta.⁵²

W.F. Edwards wrote a *Tourists' Guide and Directory to the Truckee Basin* (1883), which has a two-page spread on Webber Lake.⁵³

...the hotel is owned and conducted by Dr. D.G. Webber and is open for guests from about the 10th of May to October 1st. The Doctor came to this place over thirty years ago, and was so charmed with the location that he did not rest until he had secured it...Dr. Webber is a genial host, ever studying the welfare of his guests. The hotel is capacious, and supplied with all desirable

⁵⁰ David Manuel, *Inflation Calculator*, 2015.

⁵¹ Lemmon, "Webber Lake and its Attractions," *Pacific Rural Press*. 1877.

⁵² Frederick Shearer, *The Pacific tourist: An illustrated guide to the Pacific R.R., California and pleasure resorts across the continent*. New York: Adams & Bishop, Publishers, 1879:289.

⁵³ W.F. Edwards, *Edwards' Tourists' Guide and Directory of the Truckee Basin*, Truckee, Republican Job Print, 1883:55.

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conveniences. The grounds about form admirable camping, and taken altogether, Webber lake is one of the most delightful spots in the Sierra Nevada mountains, and the tourist cannot well afford to miss it.⁵⁴

Edwards also recalls meals at Webber Lake: “Mountain game is still in abundance, and it is not uncommon thing to sit down to mine host Webber’s table, and enjoy a bear steak, a venison haunch, a spitted hare, a broiled quail or a roasted grouse.”⁵⁵

A second guidebook, *Tourists Illustrated Guide to the Celebrated Summer and Winter Resorts of California: Adjacent to and Upon the Lines of the Central and Southern Pacific Railroads* (1883), was written by Benjamin Cummings Truman and published by the H.S. Crocker & Company, one of the “Big Four” railroad tycoons, and a known visitor to Independence and Webber Lakes.⁵⁶ At this time, Webber partnered with Augustus Moore who owned a resort hotel and station at Independence Lake. Truman accounts natural resources within reach by carriage from the hotel and “a splendid carriage ride of four miles around Lake Webber which is about a mile across in one or two ways.” Truman documents, “the hotel at Webber is situated fifty yards from the northern rim of the lake, on what is known as the Hennessey’s (sic) Pass road, and can accommodate from forty people.” Besides the hotel, camping is encouraged as “nice camping grounds all round with plenty of grass and water.” In addition to Shearer, Edwards, and Truman, Newton H. Chittenden published *Health Seekers, Tourists, and Sportsmen’s Guide to the Sea-side, Lake-side, Foothill, Mountain and Mineral Spring Health and Pleasure Reports of the Pacific Coast* (1884), and records Webber Lake as “one of the most beautiful of all these mountain lakes” and mentions the “good hotel.”⁵⁷

Because of Webber’s success in marketing his hotel to tourists, Augustus Moore built a “nature resort” in 1883 on the northeast shore of his lake to accommodate 30-40 people. With the success happening at Webber Lake, Moore partnered with his friend in marketing his property at Independence Lake with hiking trips and fishing excursions for guests. After a devastating fire in 1871, Moore built two hotels on the lake in the early 1880s. By the late 1880s, his hotel was described to be “similar to that at Webber’s Lake and was operated by a Dr. Fonda, whose clientele reportedly included members of the Crocker and Huntington families.”⁵⁸

These guidebooks were promoted Webber Lake and its hotel into the late 19th century, bringing noteworthy people, such as its most distinguished visitor, American Red Cross founder Clara Barton.⁵⁹ Her visit with friends in the summer of 1886 to Webber Lake included hunting, fishing,

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Benjamin Cummings Truman. *Tourists Illustrated Guide to the Celebrated Summer and Winter Resorts of California: Adjacent to and Upon the Lines of the Central and Southern Pacific Railroads*. San Francisco: H.S. Crocker & Co., Printers and Publishers, 1883: 108-110; Fryman, Giambastiani, and Sprengeler, “A Cultural Resources Inventory of 600 Acres at Independence Lake, Sierra and Nevada Counties, California,” 2012.

⁵⁷ Newton H. Chittenden. *Health Seekers’, Tourists’ and Sportsmen’s Guide to the Sea-side, Lake-side, Foothill, Mountain and Mineral Spring Health and Pleasure Resorts of the Pacific Coast*. San Francisco: C.A. Murdock Co., Printers, 1884:164.

⁵⁸ Fryman, Giambastiani, and Sprengeler, “A Cultural Resources Inventory of 600 Acres at Independence Lake, Sierra and Nevada Counties, California,” 2012.

⁵⁹ Myrtle Findley, “Clara Barton of the Red Cross.” *Colfax Cobbles*, April 2009.

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and dining “on venison and wild honey, and had had fond ‘memories of the little camp up among the pines.’”⁶⁰

Webber Lake Resort Decline

From July to August 1866, Webber looked to sell his “large hotel, stables, and outbuildings, corrals, and one thousand acres of meadow, at Webber Lake...There is no better paying Hotel in the country, and none more beautifully situated—a delightful summer resort.”⁶¹ It continues that an 8-mule team and 10-yoke oxen team, as well as a “fine ranch in Sierra Valley” were also being sold.⁶² The same advertisement ran again on July 10, 1868:

The mountain retreat is unquestionably the most beautiful and picturesque, as well as the most salubrious Summer Resort on the Pacific coast...the lake is embosomed in hills, some of whose tops are hoary with perpetual snow, and whose flowery slopes send forth those prolonged and startling echoes which are the wonder and admiration of every visitor.⁶³

Although there is no insight to the motives to sell the property, it is speculated that it was due to the dwindling traffic passing by the hotel on Henness Pass Road, which was detrimental to his business. It is also speculated that Webber’s failing health may have been a factor to “going east” or for having to pay off squatters in the 1860s. The 1868 records document Webber owned “160 acres of land situated on Webber Lake in Sierra Township known as the Webber Flats on Henness Pass Road [for] \$3000 improvements thereon—with Hotel Buildings, \$1200, Hotel Furniture, \$300;” a total worth of \$1800, the equivalent of a little over \$30,500, which was a significant drop from his 1863 estimate that was over \$5,400.⁶⁴ An 1873 U.S. Bureau of Land Management map shows parceled lots all around Webber Lake; therefore, it is believed that Webber sold much of his land around the lake to support himself (see **Figure 9**). In perspective, Webber’s acreage was significantly reduced from 1,000 acres in 1866 to 141 acres in 1877, according to the historical record. In saving his business, Webber readjusted his business in the 1880s with the help of tour guidebooks and period newspapers in promoting it as a vacation destination. These adjustments spared his business from closure, and set it up for future owners and ultimate conservation.

After Webber’s death in 1883, the property’s ownership bounced around numerous individuals and organizations until the Johnsons purchased it around 1915 (see **Figure 16**). The 1935 Sierra County map recorded a “W.H. Johnson” owning land in the Webber Lake area where he grazed sheep since 1915, and it is believed after Hobart Mills closed in 1936, Johnson purchased began rapidly purchasing the land around the lake into the 1940s for his livestock (see **Figure 16**).⁶⁵

William H. Johnson, born in 1879, purchased property in Roseville in 1905 where he raised sheep on 2,000 acres, which was known as Johnson Sheep Ranch on Douglas Boulevard.⁶⁶ Johnson and his wife, Cynthia, had three children: Hermon, born in 1908, Celeste, born c.1917, and Clifton “Clif” Oliver, born in 1919. Every fall, Johnson and his son Clif would drive 1,500 ewes to a

⁶⁰ Elizabeth Brown Pryor. *Clara Barton, Professional Angel*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1987:245.

⁶¹ *Sacramento Daily Union*, “Hotel Property for Sale,” August 1, 1866.

⁶² *Ibid*.

⁶³ *Sacramento Daily Union*, “Hotels and Restaurant, Webber Lake Hotel,” July 10, 1868.

⁶⁴ Manuel, *Inflation Calculator*. 2015; Sierra County Assessor’s Office. *Assessor Book, Sierra Township*, 1868.

⁶⁵ William G. Copren, “Personal Communication with Architectural Historian Corri Jimenez,” April 28, 2015.

⁶⁶ City of Roseville, “History of Roseville. 1980-1990,” 2015; U.S. Census Bureau. “William H. Johnson.” U.S. Federal Census, Township 1, Placer County, California. 1930.

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pasture near present-day Sacramento International Airport and return them in January for lambing.⁶⁷ In May, the Johnsons chose a different route, driving 3,000 sheep over 100 miles to Webber Lake.⁶⁸ The sheep drive would travel up Auburn-Folsom Road through Auburn on U.S. Highway 40 and the town of Colfax, over Donner Summit and Truckee, to Webber Lake from the 1940s into the 1960s.⁶⁹ In a 1990 interview with the *Sacramento Bee*, Clif Johnson recalled, "sounds impossible today when you think of Interstate 80...[but] traffic was light then."⁷⁰ The elder Johnson died on June 15, 1962, gifting the property at Webber "in consideration of love and affection" to his son, Clif and his wife, Barbara.⁷¹ As a former ecologist, Clif believed in "leaving the land alone" and considered the Webber Hotel "the last of its breed."⁷² In July 8, 1994, the Johnsons formed the Johnson Family Trust, and engaged in an agreement with the Truckee Donner Land Trust in preserving the sub-alpine meadow near Webber Lake.⁷³ Clif Johnson passed away on July 27, 2011, and his wife, Barbara, sold the over 3,000-acre property to the Truckee Donner Land Trust on October 31, 2012 for \$8 million that included Webber Lake and its old hotel, meadow lands through Sierra and Nevada Counties, as well as the headwaters of the Little Truckee River.⁷⁴ In an article in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, Barbara Johnson recalled that the land had been in her family for 100 years, and said, "it is such a wonderful, beautiful place—we wanted it to be preserved for other people. It certainly makes me feel good now that it will be preserved forever."⁷⁵

Criterion B: Dr. David Gould (D.G.) Webber (1809-1883)

D.G. Webber Early History

Dr. David Gould (D.G.) Webber was born on September 12, 1809, in Ontario, Livingston County, New York, to Scotch-Irish parents, William Webber and Susanna Gould.⁷⁶ His family moved to Erie County, Pennsylvania, when he was 5-years-old but left home at age 13, where he "leased himself" for three years to Dr. Woodworth of Springfield, Pennsylvania, receiving \$30 the first year that was increased to \$70 by his third.⁷⁷ In 1828, Webber bought out Dr. Woodworth and

⁶⁷ Robert D. Davila. "Obituary for Clifton Oliver Johnson." *Sacramento Bee*, August 3, 2011.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Sierra County Recorder's Office. "Grant Deed between William B. Johnson and Cynthia T. Johnson (wife) given to Clifton O. Johnson and Barbara M. Johnson." Sierra County. June 15, 1962. Book 31, Page 290; Sierra County Recorder's Office, "Quit Claim deed between Cynthia T. Johnson to Clifton O. Johnson and Barbara M. Johnson." October 2, 1964. Book 38, Page 400.

⁷² "Webber Lake's couple finally discover summer," *Sierra Sun-Bonanza*, 1983.

⁷³ Peter Fimrite. "Webber Lake, Lacey Meadow saved in deal: Conservation 3,000 acres of scenic Sierra land safeguarded by \$8 million deal." *San Francisco Chronicle*, 2012; Truckee Donner Land Trust, "Grant Deed," November 16, 2012.

⁷⁴ Tim Countis. "Sagging reminder of the past: Webber Lake Hotel lures few visitors now." *Sierra Sun-Bonanza*. n.d.; Peter Fimrite. "Webber Lake, Lacey Meadow saved in deal: Conservation 3,000 acres of scenic Sierra land safeguarded by \$8 million deal." *San Francisco Chronicle*. December 3, 2012.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Lemmon, "Webber Lake & Its Attractions," *Pacific Rural Press*. 1877.

⁷⁷ Fariss and Smith. *Illustrated History of Plumas, Lassen & Sierra Counties, with California from 1513 to 1850*. 267; Lemmon, "Webber Lake and Its Attractions," *Pacific Rural Press*, 1877; Virginia Lutes and Maren Scholberg. "David Gould Webber." *The Sierran*. Vol. XXXIV, No. 2. Summer 2006.

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continued his business for 12 years.⁷⁸ In 1833, Webber was accepted at age 24 into the practice as a physician, and married Margaret Bradish of Cramerville, Erie County, Pennsylvania.⁷⁹ The couple had a child, James, in 1835 and adopted a daughter. In 1843, Webber's wife Margaret died and he moved to temporarily to Canada.⁸⁰

While living in Chicago in 1845, Webber adopted an orphan girl, Mary, who was given to him by a patient, her pleading mother.⁸¹ Some have speculated Webber adopted 50 children in his life, and his Sierra County biography records 9-13 children who came into his life as either a foster or orphan, and eventually moved west with him to California; two of his children became doctors practicing medicine, one became a merchant, and another a lawyer.⁸² His biological son, James, went west to practice as a doctor in California with Webber, however, died at the early age of 22 in Sacramento in 1857. Webber also took in his second cousin, Dr. Joseph "Joe" Connorer Webber who was a native of Hamilton County, Ohio. He graduated from Toland Medical College in San Francisco and practiced with Webber in the Sierra Valley area until his death on October 31, 1871 at the age of 33 (see **Photo 19**).⁸³ His adopted daughter Mary became a talented music teacher, married businessman A.J Anderson, and assisted him as a caretaker of the Webber Lake Hotel, which was published in an 1880s advertisement (see **Figure 11**).⁸⁴

Webber's endeavors in Downieville to the Sierra Valley

Dr. D.G. Webber departed for California in December 1849 and arrived in the state in April 1850 at the height of the Gold Rush, where he turned to mining in the summer of 1850 in Downieville.⁸⁵

In 1851, he bought property on Goodyears Creek near Monte Cristo, known as Oak Ranch, and sold it the following year to buy a sawmill in Downieville.⁸⁶ In the Downieville area, he engaged in milling/mining operations as early as 1852, which was the same year Sierra County was carved out of Yuba County. The Sierra County's records in October-September 1856 show Webber purchased a ½ of a ¼ of interest in the Sierra Buttes Quartz Company with the Ariel Quartz Company in Sierra City.⁸⁷ Bounded by the granite cliffs of Sierra Buttes, Sierra City are located at its base and became an early gold rush town in the spring of 1850 with a population as high as

⁷⁸ Farris & Smith, *All Illustrated history of Plumas, Lassen & Sierra Counties: with California from 1513 to 1850*, 267.

⁷⁹ Lemmon, "Webber Lake and Its Attractions," *Pacific Rural Press*, 1877; Farris & Smith, *All Illustrated history of Plumas, Lassen & Sierra Counties: with California from 1513 to 1850*, 267.

⁸⁰ Farris & Smith, *All Illustrated history of Plumas, Lassen & Sierra Counties: with California from 1513 to 1850*, 267; Nona McGlashan. "David Webber, Philanthropic Founder of Webber Lake Resort." *Sierra Heritage*. Vol. XXXIV, No. 3. December 1984:1.

⁸¹ Farris & Smith, *All Illustrated history of Plumas, Lassen & Sierra Counties: with California from 1513 to 1850*, 267; Lemmon, "Webber Lake and Its Attractions," *Pacific Rural Press*, 1877.

⁸² Farris & Smith, *All Illustrated history of Plumas, Lassen & Sierra Counties: with California from 1513 to 1850*, 267.

⁸³ Lemmon, "Webber Lake and Its Attractions," *Pacific Rural Press*, 1877.

⁸⁴ Lemmon, "Webber Lake and Its Attractions," *Pacific Rural Press*, 1877. Note, the 1880 U.S. Census recorded her husband as a "Hotel Keeper" and herself "Keeping House" with their two children, with 10-year-old, Ed. L. and 2-year-old, Andrew J, living in the Sierra Valley.

⁸⁵ Farris & Smith, *All Illustrated history of Plumas, Lassen & Sierra Counties: with California from 1513 to 1850*, 267.

⁸⁶ Lemmon, "Webber Lake and Its Attractions," *Pacific Rural Press*, 1877; Farris & Smith, *All Illustrated history of Plumas, Lassen & Sierra Counties: with California from 1513 to 1850*, 267.

⁸⁷ Sierra County Recorder's Office. "W.G. Webber to the Sierra Quartz Company," 1856.

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3,000, and by 1851, yield over \$7 million dollars in gold. P.A. Haven and Joseph Zumwalt founded Sierra City, and within two years, mining tunnels penetrated deep into Sierra Buttes and twenty mule-pulled arrastras were pulverizing ore.⁸⁸

In addition to mining, Webber supervised and constructed infrastructures in the new Sierra County seat of Downieville that included Galloway Road and Durgan Flat Bridge, the first wagon road and bridge in the town, as well spent two years as a Sierra County school superintendent.⁸⁹ The road was recorded as a feat for Webber, and it was not fully finished until the summer of 1854.⁹⁰ The graded road was vital in bringing product and supplies into Downieville, such as materials for the new courthouse Webber built. On March 14, 1854, Webber with H.B. Cossitt, Benjamin Hall, and Alanson Smith were appointed as a committee to work on plans and specifications to upgrade a small log cabin that functioned as the Sierra County Courthouse that included a jail.⁹¹ Webber was ultimately awarded the contract to build the new courthouse, as well as a 5-cell jail and jailer's house, for \$12,975, which was reflected at the time as "such a liberal price."⁹² The courthouse measured 35 feet by 51 feet and had 36 feet by 13 feet jail, aside a 36 feet by 20 feet jailer's house. On May 27, 1854, the newspaper *Sierra Citizen* recorded:

Dr. Webber, with some half a dozen hands, has been engaged in repairing the wagon road between this place [Downieville] and Galloway's Ranch; and on Wednesday he succeeded in bringing down two wagons heavily loaded with iron doors and grating for the new jail.

The courthouse was ultimately completed in August 1854; however, the County Board of Supervisors did not occupy it until May 6, 1855 that was an neither "imposing or gorgeous structure" but had "a very substantial and credible appearance."⁹³ As a Classical Revival style building, it was commonly similar to the Webber Lake Hotel. It was a log-constructed building with horizontal wood weatherboards, 12-lite sash wood windows, and a closed pediment gable (see **Figure 7**). A 1919 *Guide to County Archives of California* described the building as, "a wooden structure...with two brick vaults...used for the official records."⁹⁴ The guide also mentions the courthouse was "no way fireproof" and sadly, it was devastated by fire in 1947. It was replaced in 1954 by the current standing building, one hundred years after the construction of Webber's courthouse.

The Physician of Sierra Valley

As a physician in the Sierra Valley, Dr. Webber established offices and pharmacies as early as 1860 in both Loyaltan and Sierraville that were his prominent businesses in the winter months. At

⁸⁸ Rensch, Rensch, and Hoover, *Historic Spots in California: Valley and Sierra Counties*, 392.

⁸⁹ Farris & Smith, *All Illustrated history of Plumas, Lassen & Sierra Counties: with California from 1513 to 1850*, 267.

⁹⁰ James J. Sinnott. "Downieville," *History of Sierra County: Downieville, Gold Town on the Yuba*. Fresno: Mid-Cal Publishers, 1977:74.

⁹¹ Lewis Publishing Company. *A Memorial and Biographical History of Northern California, Illustrated: Containing a History of this Important Section of the Pacific Coast from the Earliest Period of Its Occupancy...and Biographical Mention of Many of Its Most Eminent Pioneers and Also of Prominent Citizens of Today*. Chicago: Lewis Publishing Company, 1891:238.

⁹² Farris & Smith, *All Illustrated history of Plumas, Lassen & Sierra Counties: with California from 1513 to 1850*, 347.

⁹³ *Ibid*.

⁹⁴ Owen Cochran Coy, Ph.D. *Guide to County Archives of California*. Sacramento: California Printing Office, California Historical Survey Commission, 1919:499.

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this time, the population in the county was over 11,860 people, which is significant than its current population in the county that stands around 2,700. Webber marketed and prescribed his “Webber’s Pills” for everything, although no information was uncovered as to what symptoms they cured.⁹⁵ One overland pioneer on Henness Pass Road was Lucretia Epperson who was traveling from Coles County, Illinois, to Yuba County. She fell ill and recorded briefly in her journal on August 30, 1864:

... to procure the assistance of Dr. Weber [sic], who was absent. Left a message to have him come as soon as he returned. Was sick for several days; finally Dr. Weber came and gave me some medicine which soon gave relief. He refused pay for his visit; we were thankful to him and hope some day it will be my privilege to pay him tenfold.⁹⁶

It seems that refusing pay, as cited in Epperson’s account, was typical for Webber. Augustus Moore, a business partner and a fellow hotel owner who managed the Independence Lake Hotel on Henness Pass Road, recalled in 1878: “The Dr. has a large warm heart and all old pioneers hold him in high esteem.”⁹⁷ Webber’s good friend and renown biologist, J.G. Lemmon who frequented Webber Lake Hotel declared that money was never an issue for Webber and he offered his services “gratis to the poor and unfortunate who could not pay until work could be found and the sick come to the lake fore [sic] treatment, if indigent, are cured free of charge.”⁹⁸ Dr. Webber added a sanitarium for tuberculosis patients and a solarium for sunbathing at Webber Lake in reinventing his hotel into a “health and pleasure summer resort” sometime in the 1870s.⁹⁹ Lemmon described these new additions as “Dr. D. G. Webber, at his spacious hotel and sanitarium is of the most satisfactory kind, for he is a genial, efficient, liberal-hearted gentleman, and one of the most skillful, sympathetic, benevolent and successful physicians in California.”¹⁰⁰ Lemmon spoke highly of Webber and his philanthropy:

The wealth of Dr. Webber has been reduced by his benevolent projects, the liberal assistance of relatives (once giving two-thirds of his property to two brothers) by mining failures and hard winters, to the value of a few thousands now, but still he has sufficient to prevent reliance for support solely upon the profits of his hotel or the practice of his profession. The poor and unfortunate are entertained gratis, until can find employment, and the sick either in Sierra valley or those who come to the lake fore treatment, if indigent, are cured free of charge.¹⁰¹

Because of his benevolence to his friend, Lemmon honored Webber by naming three native plants after him: Webber Needle Grass (*Achnatherum webberi*), Webber’s Milk-vetch (*Astragalus webberi*), and Webber’s Ivesia (*Ivesia webberi*).

Webber and his Namesake Lake

⁹⁵ J.R. Daly. “History of Plumas-Sierra.” *Plumas-Sierra Historical Association*, 1940:6; Lutes and Scholberg “David Gould Webber, 2006.

⁹⁶ Kenneth L. Holmes. *Covered Wagon Women Diaries & Letters from the Western Trails, 1862-1865*. Omaha: University of Nebraska Press, 1999:197.

⁹⁷ Lemmon, “Webber Lake and Its Attractions,” *Pacific Rural Press*, 1877; Fryman, Giambastiani and Sprengeler, “A Cultural Resources Inventory of 600 Acres at Independence Lake, Sierra and Nevada Counties, California,” 2012.

⁹⁸ Lemmon, “Webber Lake and Its Attractions,” *Pacific Rural Press*, 1877.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

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Dr. D.G. Webber hired mountain man Caleb Greenwood to guide him to “Truckee Lake,” a common name for the small alpine lake in the area that would later be known as Webber Lake.¹⁰² Webber laid claim to the lake in 1852 for \$50.00, building a “ranch” and stocking his lake with trout from the Sierra Valley.¹⁰³ Sometime between 1852-54, Webber began slowly acquiring land around the lake and built “Webber’s Ranch.” Because of his well-established knowledge on construction, Webber is believed to have built the Webber Lake Hotel and its station in 1860. It opened to public possibly that year.¹⁰⁴ Because of the harsh winters in the Webber Lake area, he managed the hotel in the summer months and spent the winters at his ranch in Loyaltan’s Smith’s Neck. The 1863 Sierra County Assessor books record Webber living at “Smith’s Neck,” near the town of Loyaltan. He is also recorded owning 65 stock cattle, 150 stock horses, a stable for horses, a wagon, and managing the “Hotel and Ranch at Little Truckey [sic] Lake on the Hennes Pass (\$1000).”¹⁰⁵ Webber’s total property value for the year was \$5,430, which is equivalent to over \$102,450 in 2018, making him one of the wealthiest individuals in the county.¹⁰⁶ Reporter J. Ross Browne that year accounted the Webber Lake area:

Squatters had squatted upon the Doctor’s possessions, and he had had to buy them out; drovers have driven their cattle over his fences, and he has had to drive them out; teamsters have cut down and burnt his trees, and emigrants have used up his grass and failed to pay for it.¹⁰⁷

Squatters were a big problem across California during the 1850-60s because of the number of people coming to the state, and services were vital for travelers, especially on the Hennes Pass Road. The county assessor’s records in 1866-67 accounted many features that included a “hotel, barns, stables, warehouse, and blacksmith shop at Webber Lake.”¹⁰⁸ Through it all, he retained ownership of his hotel along with “milling and other purposes and propagating fish merchandise.”¹⁰⁹ An 1877 advertisement promoted its season, open from May 20th to November 1st as “a resort for families and lovers of rare scenery, excellent fishing and fine drives, this hotel excels all others” (see **Figure 10**).¹¹⁰

In 1880, Warren Barlow Johnson wrote an overland account, titled *From the Pacific to the Atlantic: Being an Account of a Journey Overland from Eureka, Humboldt Co., California, to Webster, Worcester Co., Mass., with a Horse, Carriage, Cow and Dog* (1887) that is a scripted conversation between Johnson and Webber.¹¹¹ As a 6 foot 5 inch tall man, Webber answered to the “Doctor” and was generous to allow Johnson to graze his cattle in a nearby meadow. Questions

¹⁰² Hinkle and Hinkle. *Sierra Nevada Lakes*, 1949: 226; McGlashan. “David Webber, Philanthropic Founder of Webber Lake Resort,” *Sierra Heritage*, 1984: 3.

¹⁰³ Hinkle and Hinkle, *Sierra Nevada Lakes*, 1949: 228.

¹⁰⁴ Farris & Smith, *All Illustrated history of Plumas, Lassen & Sierra Counties: with California from 1513 to 1850*, 1882: 267.

¹⁰⁵ Sierra County Assessor’s Office. *Assessor Book*, Sierra Township.1863; Manuel, *Inflation Calculator*. 2015.

¹⁰⁶ Manuel, *Inflation Calculator*. 2015.

¹⁰⁷ Barrett. “Early recollections of Webber Lake,” 1976; Lemmon, “Webber Lake and Its Attractions,” *Pacific Rural Press*, 1877.

¹⁰⁸ Sierra County Assessor’s Office. *Assessor Book*, Sierra Township, 1866-67.

¹⁰⁹ Sierra County Assessor’s Office. *Assessor Book*, Sierra Township, 1877-78.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Warren Barlow Johnson. *From the Pacific to the Atlantic: Being an Account of a Journey Overland from Eureka, Humboldt Co., California, to Webster, Worcester Co., Mass., with a Horse, Carriage, Cow and Dog*. Webster, Massachusetts: John Cort, Printer and Bookbinder, 1887: 90-93.

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were exchanged between Johnson and the “Doctor,” which discussed wild cats and wolves as well as the two-day travel it took to get to Reno from Webber Lake. Numerous accounts similar to this were found in archival research and all provide a lively picture to Webber as a genial person.

Dr. D.G. Webber’s Death

On March 4, 1877, the *Pacific Rural Press* reported on Webber’s health, six years before his passing:

Dr. Webber has two mortal enemies, against which he is ever on guard, erysipelas and typhoid pneumonia. An attack of erysipelas many years ago destroyed the sight of his left eye, another compelled the amputation of the index finger on his right hand. Pneumonia has recently brought the doctor twice to the verge of the tomb. The people of Sierra valley pray that he may long be spared to them, but whenever Death shall come, be it sooner or later, he will but recall the spirit of a true man which has been sent among us to illustrate the high capabilities, uses and destiny of humanity.¹¹²

By 1882, the year before Webber’s death, he retained 141 acres.¹¹³ In addition to his property on Webber Lake, he owned Lot 8, Block 5 in Loyalton as well as two lots in the Dodge’s Addition in Loyalton. Webber owned his properties up to his death on June 8, 1883 (see **Photo 19**). The *Reno Evening Gazette* reported a colorful view of Webber death:

Death of a Pioneer. Dr. Webber died near Loyalton yesterday; of rheumatism and general physical decay. He was one of the oldest of mountain pioneers, having located in the Sierras as early as 1850. He was the first settler at Webber Lake, which was named after him, and into which he claims to have put the first fish. Though a man of considerable intelligence, his habits were queer beyond eccentricity, therefore his circle of warm friends was somewhat contracted; but these who knew him intimately could see many good qualities in him. He was 77 years old. Old timers say that when he first arrived here he looked quite as old as when he died. His funeral will occur at Loyalton next Sunday at two o’clock under the auspices of the Odd Fellows. He requested that his body be laid beside that of his nephew, Dr. Joe Webber.

Webber left no will for any of his assets. His executors, Thomas Flint and E.L. Case, sold all of his property that included Webber Lake to William B. Tiffany for the cost of \$1500 on October 30, 1884.¹¹⁴ Tiffany ultimately would be one of a handful of property owners that would own his lake property.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Sierra County Assessor’s Office. *Assessor Book, Sierra Township*, 1882.

¹¹⁴ Sierra County Recorder’s Office. “Estate of D.G. Webber to William B. Tiffany.” October 30, 1884.

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Conclusion

The Webber Lake Hotel is located on the shoreline of Webber Lake in Sierra County and is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places for its local significance in the county. The hotel is set on Henness Pass Road in a rural setting, surrounded by historic-period buildings, such as the 1850s Webber's Station and mill buildings that were relocated there from the 1930s Hobart Mills. Built in 1860, the hotel was managed by pioneer and proprietor Dr. D.G. Webber as a recreational resort for wilderness seekers, looking to escape to the outdoors and was promoted in both California and Nevada by him until his death in 1883. The Webber Lake Hotel is locally significant and the best representative of Dr. D.G. Webber's life, which includes the oldest hotel/stage stop on Henness Pass Road and an early recreational resort that served tourists in California as well as Nevada. The hotel has a period of significance from 1860 to 1883.

The Webber Lake Hotel is believed to be the earliest, standing hotel establishment on Henness Pass Road (1849-1868) in Sierra County. Henness Pass Road was one of three major thoroughfares across the Sierra Nevada Mountains, and considered the most reliable route for freight wagons, stagecoaches, and prairie schooners. The road had approximately thirty establishments that included hotels to stage stops along the route to accommodate travelers and emigrants. These businesses provided necessary amenities, such as blacksmith shops, grazing lands, drinking water, and campsites, which were all visible at Webber Lake. Webber Lake Hotel also accommodated travelers on the road that traveled to California's Overland Trail as well as Nevada's Comstock Mining District. The Webber Lake Hotel is associated with events tied to Henness Pass Road, and was visited by hundreds of individuals who stayed in the building or resided on the grounds (Criterion A).

The Webber Lake Hotel, built 1860, is a 2 ½-story, log-constructed hotel and is a vernacular building with some classical details. The hotel was widely advertised in historical newspapers in California and Nevada as hunting and fishing destination and was promoted in popular tourist guidebooks. After the completion of the Central Pacific Railroad in 1868, Dr. D.G. Webber marketed the hotel to tourists who accessed its serenity by weekly stagecoaches from Truckee and other communities. Webber's sound investments and promotional literature in recreational guidebooks in the 1870-80s allowed future owners to conserve the site. Today, the Webber Lake Hotel is arrested in time as a recreational resort that embodies distinctive characteristics of the 1860s and retains its architectural integrity directly connected to this early history (Criterion A).

Dr. David Gould (D.G.) Webber (1809-1883) was a pioneer, miner, physician, entrepreneur, and builder in Sierra County. He was one of the county's most prominent figures who built the county's first bridge across the Yuba River, first wagon road in Downieville, Sierra County Courthouse in Downieville, as well as the Webber Lake Hotel in the Sierra Valley. His memory is honored with many natural features bearing his name, such as Webber Lake and Webber Peak, and three native plant species. The Webber Lake Hotel is the only standing building associated with Dr. D.G. Webber, an important local person in the county (Criterion B).

In conclusion, Webber Lake Hotel is nominated for its significance to the National Register under Criteria A and B.

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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 # _____

recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: Sierra County Courthouse, Downieville, Sierra County, California

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than an acre

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 39.490485°

Longitude: 120.455029°

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Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

1. Zone: 10S Easting: 722481.70 Northing: 4374388.27

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The Webber Lake Hotel is set on a north-south axis and is about 50 feet from the Webber Lake shoreline, Webber’s namesake lake, and fronts the historic Henness Pass Road. The parcel is situated on a portion of land within T20N / R14E, Section 28, Mount Diablo Meridian. The Webber Lake Hotel is set on a large 313-acre parcel (APN 014-090-008) surrounded by other period buildings, cabins, outbuildings, which is part of an over 3,000 acres acquisition owned by the Truckee Donner Land Trust and held in conservation.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The Webber Lake Hotel is set on a 313-acre parcel surrounded by other resources built at different periods and different historic contexts. Because the hotel is on a large lot, the National Register boundaries are limited to only the hotel, a less than an acre lot, based on a developed context associated with the hotel, Henness Pass Road, and its proprietor Dr. D.G. Webber (see **Figure 2**). The boundary to the west is a dirt access road, the south is the shoreline of Webber Lake, east is a dirt road that separates the hotel from the Webber Lake Station, and north boundary is up to an outbuilding, approximately 10 feet north of the hotel’s rear wall.

11. Form Prepared By

Name/title: Corri Jimenez, M.S., Architectural Historian/Historic Preservation Consultant
Organization: Independent Consultant
Street & number: P.O. Box 580
City or town: Tahoe City State: California Zip code: 96145
E-mail: Corri Jimenez@yahoo.com
Telephone: (408) 710-2894 Date: August 15, 2018

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

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Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Webber Lake Hotel

City or Vicinity: Webber Lake

County: Sierra **State:** California

Photographer: Corri Jimenez

Date Photographed: March 27, 2015; May 10, 2015; and June 3, 2018

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- Photo 1 of 19:** CA_SierraCounty_WebberLakeHotel_001
Exterior view, Webber Lake Station, looking northeast
- Photo 2 of 19:** CA_SierraCounty_WebberLakeHotel_002
Exterior view, Webber Lake Hotel south elevation, looking north
- Photo 3 of 19:** CA_SierraCounty_WebberLakeHotel_003
Exterior view, Webber Lake Hotel doorway entrance, looking north
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Exterior view, Webber Lake Hotel east elevation, looking northwest
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Interior detail, Webber Lake Hotel Pintle/Hinge in Room 103
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Exterior view, Dr. D.G. Webber and Joseph Webber gravesites in Mountain View Cemetery, Loyalton, California

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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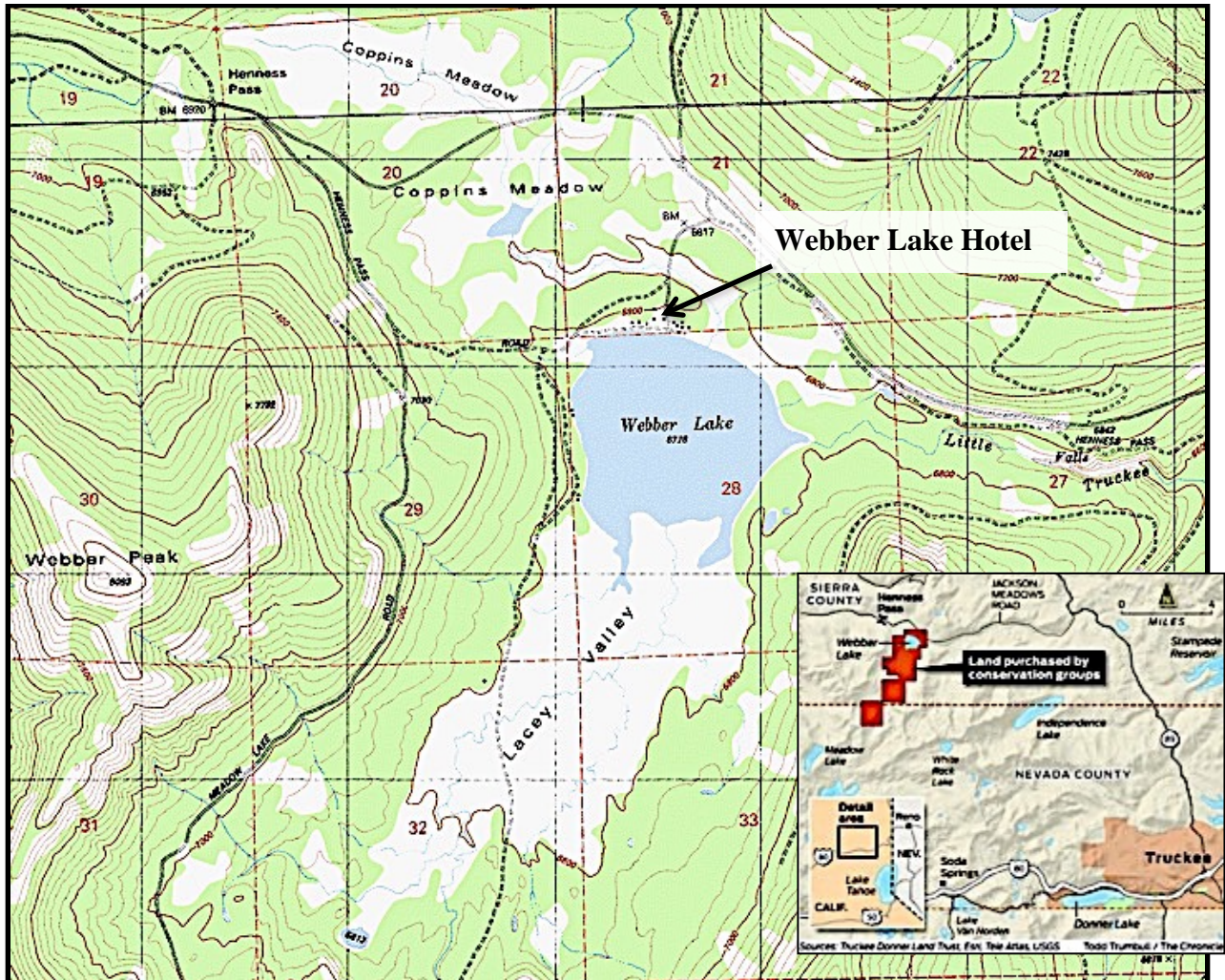
(Resize, compact, and paste images of maps and historic documents in this section. Place captions, with figure numbers above each image. Orient maps so that north is at the top of the page, all documents should be inserted with the top toward the top of the page).

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FIGURE 1: WEBBER LAKE HOTEL, LOCATION MAP, AND SURROUNDING AREA

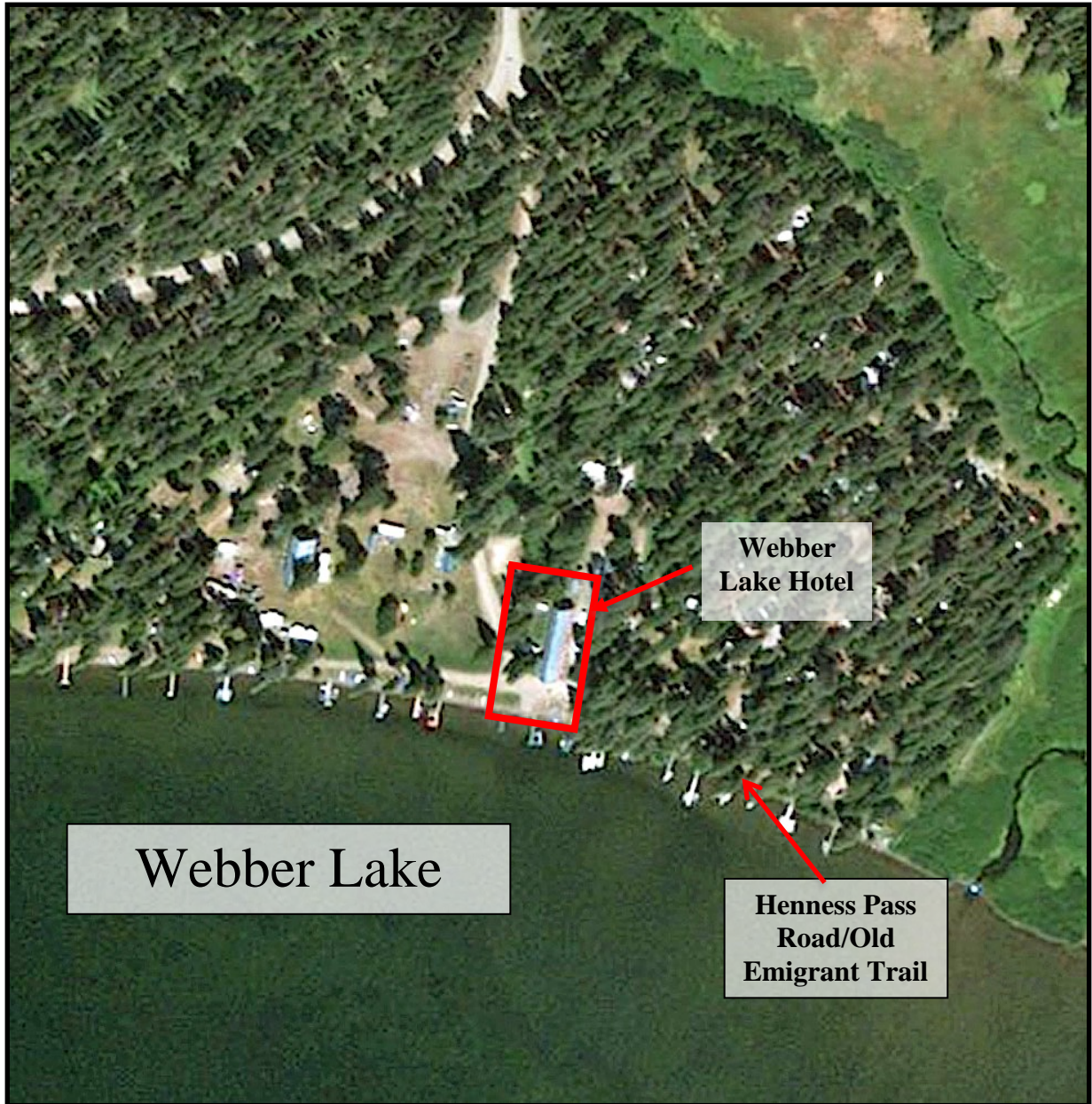


Source: Accessed June 17, 2018 at <http://yosemitenews.info/forum/read.php?3,61422,61422,>
www.Topoquest.com.

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FIGURE 2: NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION BOUNDARY



Source: Google Earth, 2014.

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FIGURE 3: WEBBER LAKE HOTEL, SOUTH ELEVATION

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Photos taken of
this elevation:
Photo 2
Photo 3



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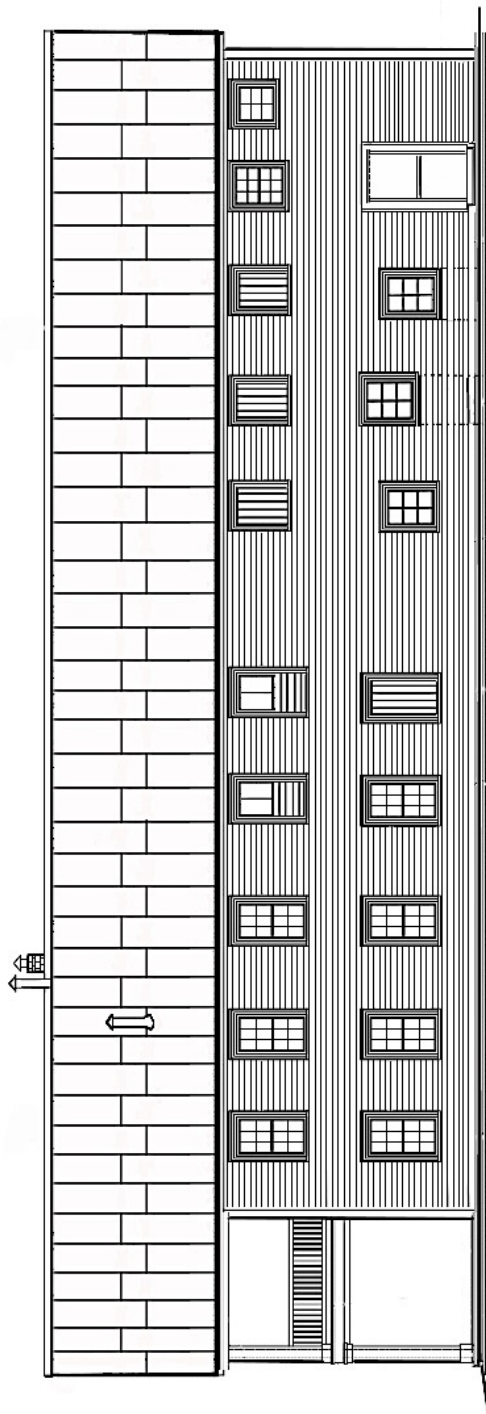
Sierra Co., California
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Source: Dennis Zirbel Architect, 2014, edited by Corri Jimenez, M.S. 2018. Not to scale.

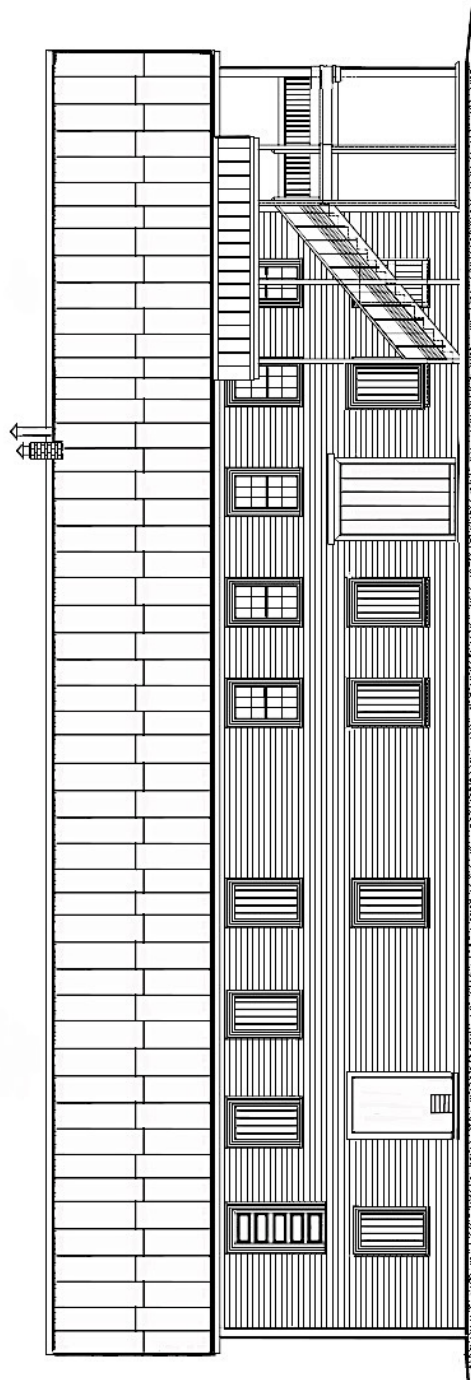
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FIGURE 4: EAST AND WEST ELEVATIONS



East Elevation



West Elevation

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FIGURE 5: NORTH ELEVATION



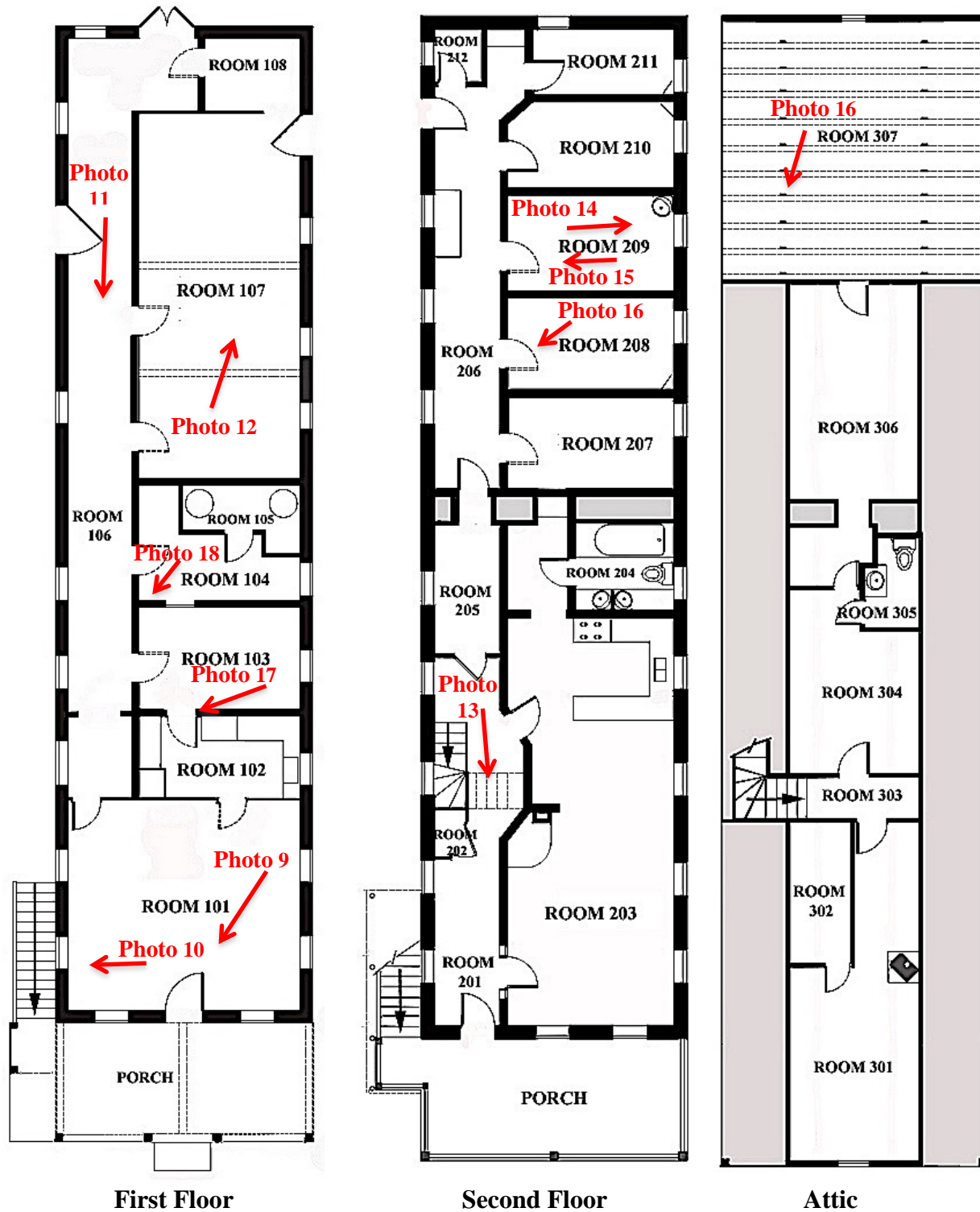
Photos taken of
this elevation:
Photo 6

Source: Dennis Zirbel Architect, 2014, edited by Corri Jimenez, M.S., 2018. Not to scale.

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FIGURE 6. WEBBER LAKE HOTEL, INTERIOR PLANS



Source: Dennis Zirbel Architect, 2014, edited by Corri Jimenez, M.S., 2018. Not to scale.

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FIGURE 7. 1854 SIERRA COUNTY COURTHOUSE, DOWNIEVILLE



Source: "Sierra County Courthouse, Downieville, Calif." Courthouse History.com. Accessed May 28, 2018 at <http://courthousehistory.com/gallery/states/california/counties/sierra>.

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FIGURE 8. WEBBER LAKE HOTEL, AUGUST 1868

HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS.

WEBBER LAKE HOTEL

 **IS NOW OPENED FOR THE** reception of Guests. This mountain retreat is unquestionably the most beautiful and picturesque, as well as the most salubrious **SUMMER RESORT** on the Pacific coast. The Lake is embosomed in hills, some of whose tops are hoary with perpetual snow, and whose flowery slopes send forth those prolonged and startling echoes which are the wonder and admiration of every visitor. It would be difficult to enumerate the many points of interest in the vicinity, such as the Cascades—over 70 feet fall—the Lake, Parks, Scenery, etc.

The Stage leaves Coburn's Station on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday mornings, arriving at the Lake in the afternoon. Fare from Coburn's to the Lake, \$3 50.

No extra charges made for Horses, Boats, etc.

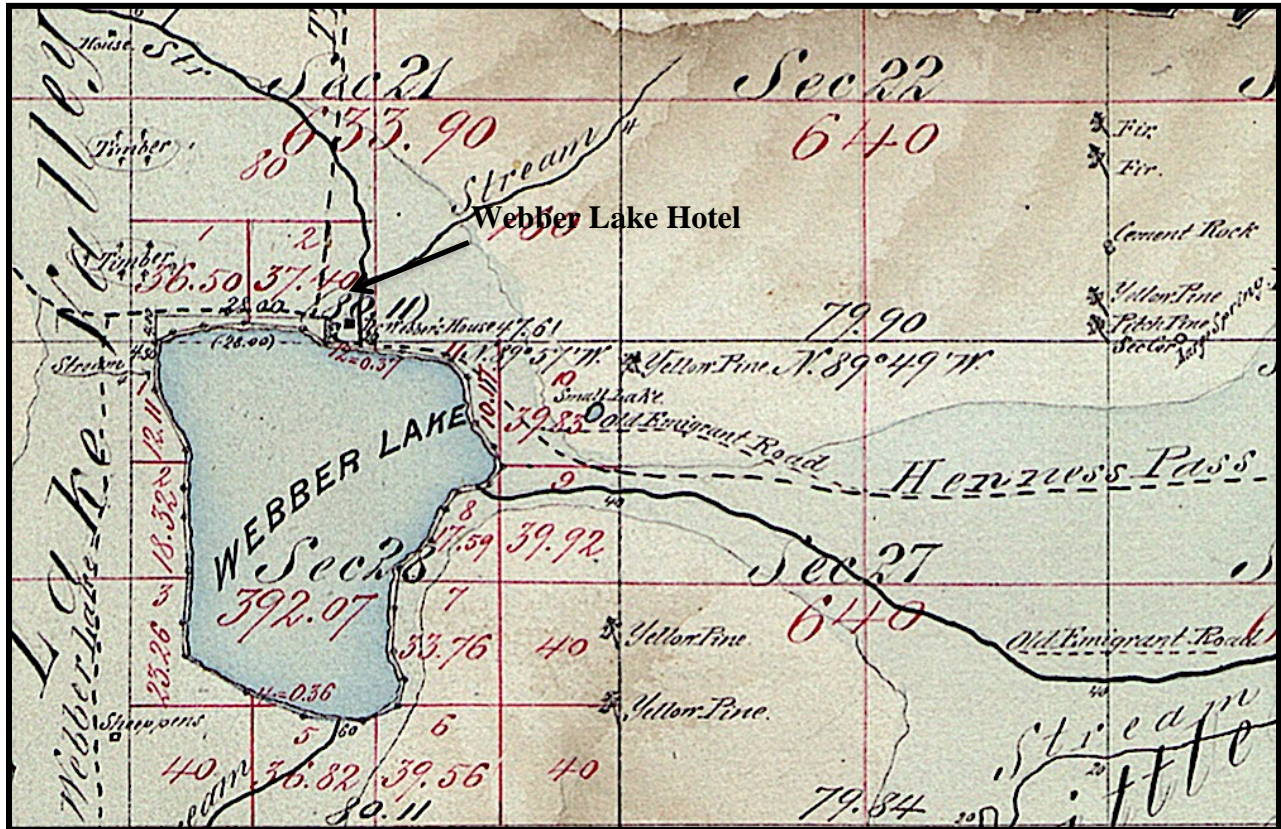
DR. D. G. WEBBER, Proprietor.
Address, by Express, Coburn's Station. au10-1m4p

Source: "Webber Lake Hotel." *Sacramento Daily Union*, 19 August 1868.

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FIGURE 9. WEBBER LAKE HOTEL, U.S. SURVEY MAP OF WEBBER LAKE, 1873.

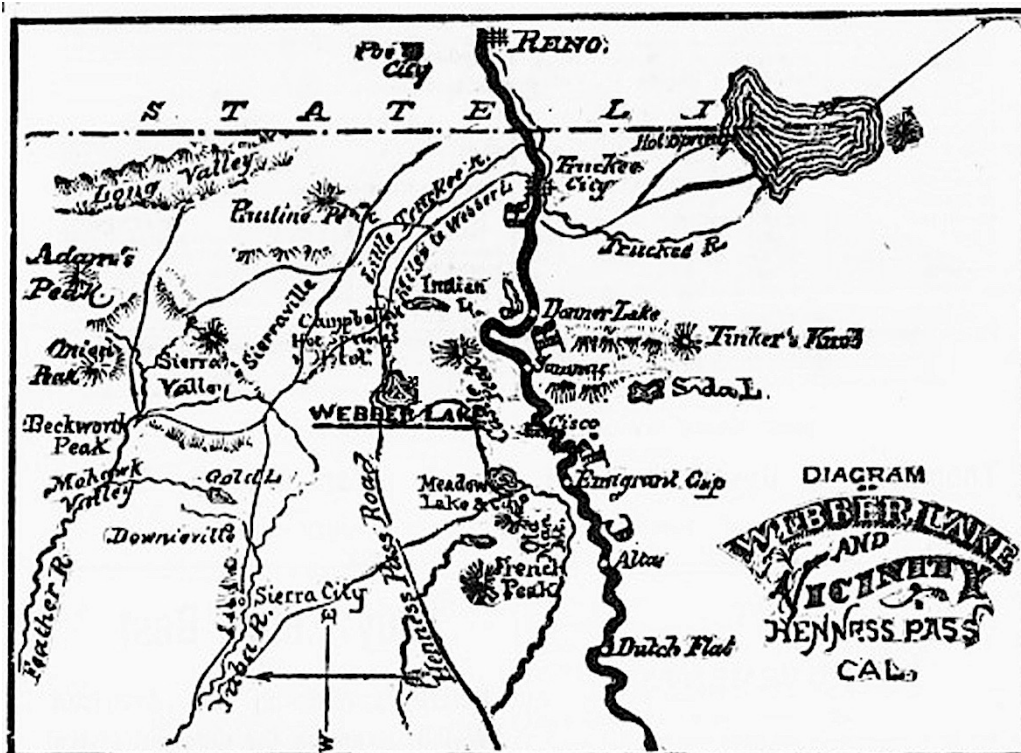
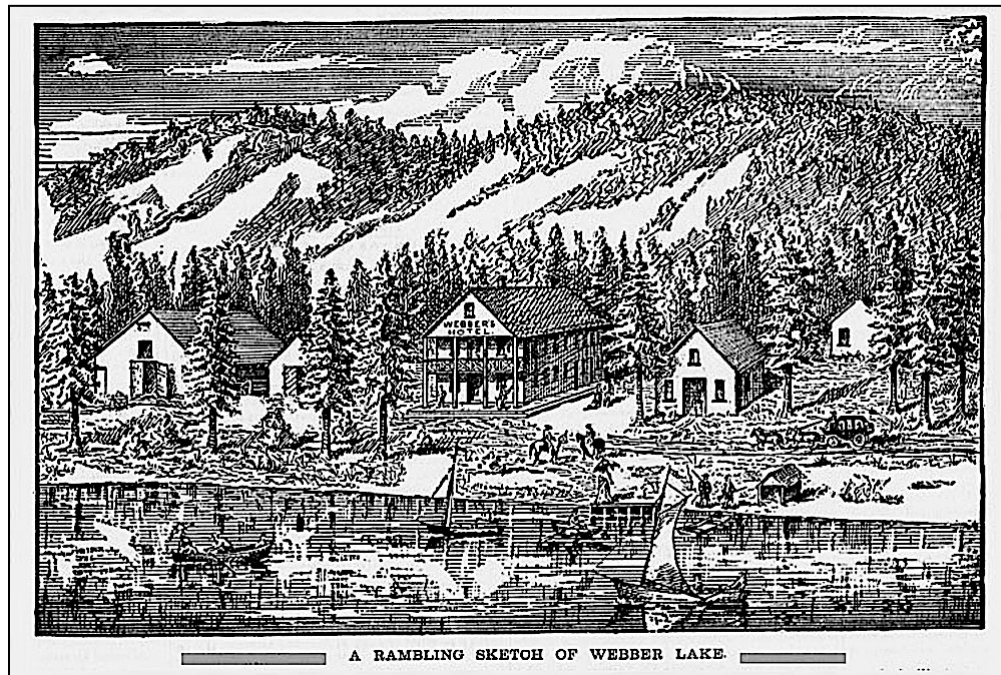


Source: Map surveyed by J.R. Haranburgh on June 2, 1873 for Township 19N, Range 14E (Bureau of Land Management 1873). Note, Henness Pass Road, labeled “Henness Pass Wagon Road,” follows in and out an “Old Emigrant Road,” which is believed to be the Truckee River Route and one of the earliest emigrant routes.

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FIGURE 10. WEBBER LAKE HOTEL AND STAGE ROUTE, JUNE 9, 1877



Source: J.G. Lemmon, "A Rambling Sketch of Webber Lake." *Pacific Rural Press*, 9 June 1877.

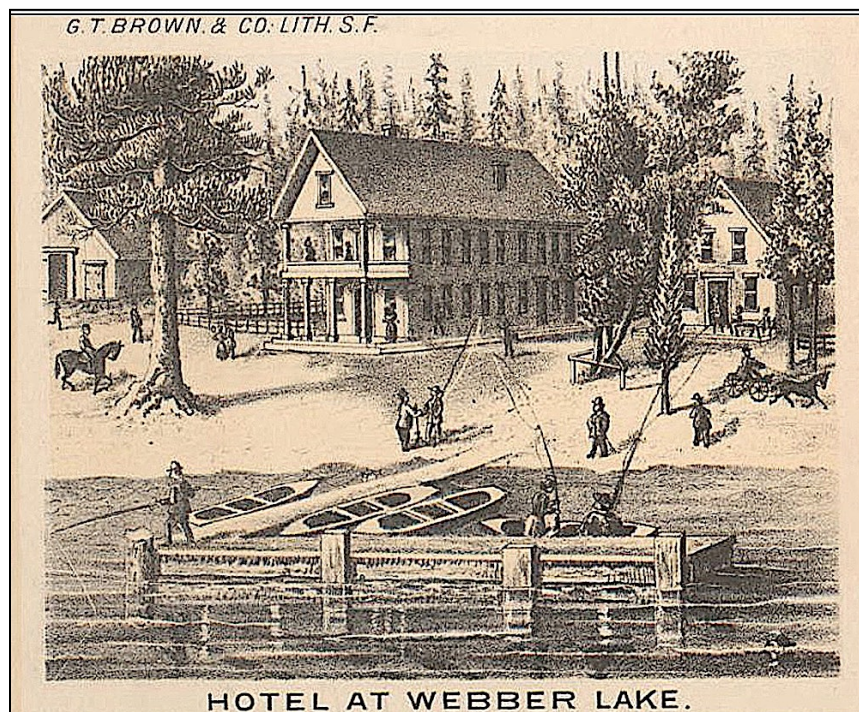
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FIGURE 11. WEBBER LAKE HOTEL, 1883



WEBBER LAKE
SIERRA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA.
PROPRIETOR, MANAGER,
DAVID G. WEBBER, M. D. A. JAY ANDERSON.
Hotel Open for Visitors from June 1st to November 1st.
TERMS, \$3.00 PER DAY.
Boats Furnished Guests Free of Charge.
Webber's Stages Leave Truckee, Tuesdays and Fridays, Fare, \$3.
Fare from San Francisco to Truckee per C. P. R. R. \$14.
Webber Lake is situated twenty-four miles northwest of Truckee, and one mile east of the Summit of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. It is directly on the line of the old Henness Pass road from Nevada City, Cal., to Virginia City, Nev.
The lake contains the finest trout to be found in any of the mountain lakes, averaging from three-fourths to one and one-half pounds, affording rare and unequalled sport for the angler all the season.
The surroundings could not be more beautiful, as it is hemmed in all around by heavy timbered mountain ranges, where the finest specimens of Fir, Tamarack and Pine are growing in all their majestic grandeur.
Being at an elevation of 6,925 feet above the sea, its health-giving qualities cannot be too highly appreciated, especially for those who live in the low valley, and on the Coast range. The temperature in the summer is from seventy to eighty degrees; the evenings always cool and pleasant. From this point, tourists can radiate in all directions to a number of interesting and beautiful places of interest.
The "Lake of the Woods" is a small lake situated about one mile north of Webber, on the Summit, where a fine panoramic view may be had of Sierra Valley and mountain ranges beyond. It is a favorite excursion trip for visitors from the hotel.

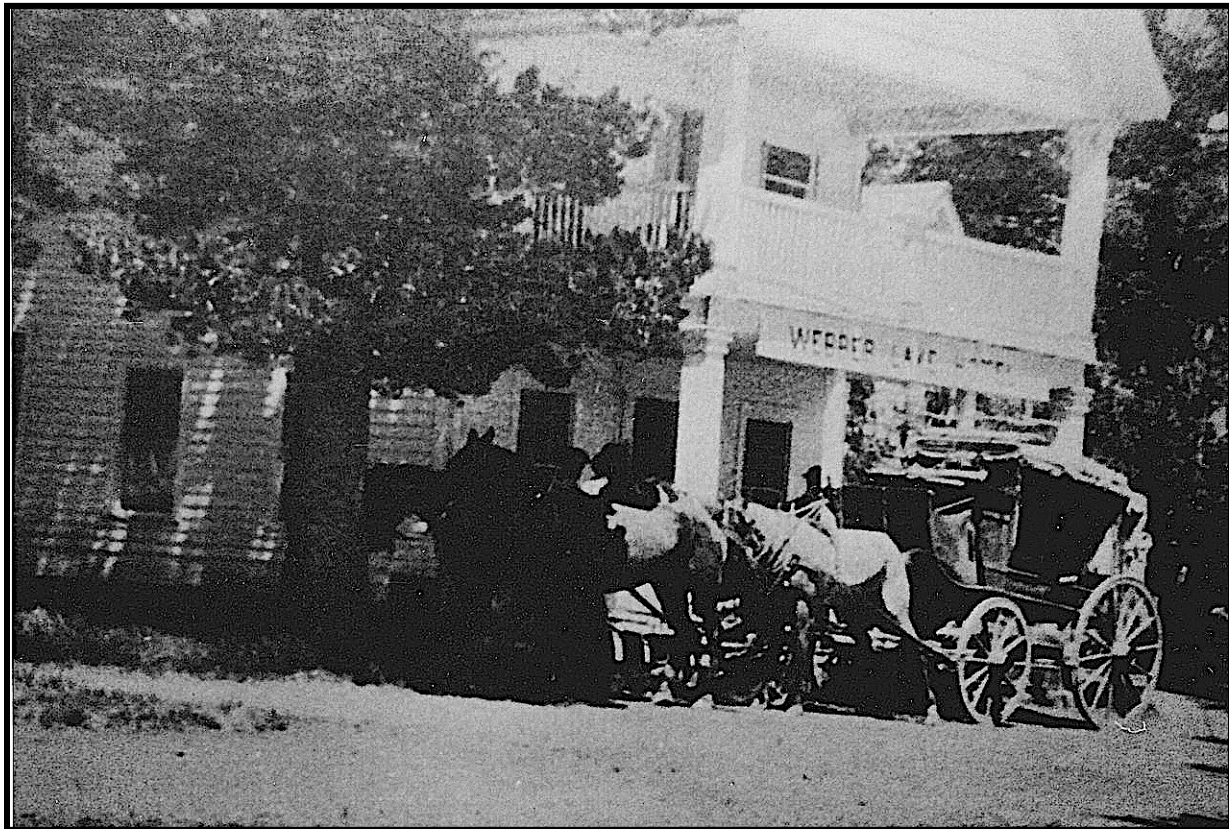
Source: G.T. Brown & Co. (1841-1918), American, lithographer. Courtesy of UC Berkeley, Bancroft Library. Accessed January 5, 2018 at

<http://imgzoom.cdlib.org/Fullscreen.ics?ark=ark:/13030/tft1nb4wq/z1&&brand=calisphere>.

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FIGURE 12. WEBBER LAKE HOTEL WITH STAGE, c.1880



Source: Webber Lake Hotel, circa 1880. Accessed June 17, 2018

<https://findery.com/RenRatCA/notes/webber-lake-hotel-circa1880>. Note: this photograph is located in the Webber Lake Hotel, Sierra County.

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FIGURE 13. WEBBER LAKE HOTEL, n.d.



Source: McGlashan 1984, cited at the Emigrant Trail Museum. Note, according to the Emigrant Trail Museum, it is cited as "1860s" however it is believed to be possibly later, sometime in 1880.

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FIGURE 14. WEBBER LAKE, 1908



Source: Webber Lake Postcard. Provided by Michelle Schmitter to Corri Jimenez in 2017. Located in the Nevada Historical Society and is mislabeled as associated with Lake Tahoe.

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FIGURE 15. WEBBER LAKE HOTEL, c. 1920

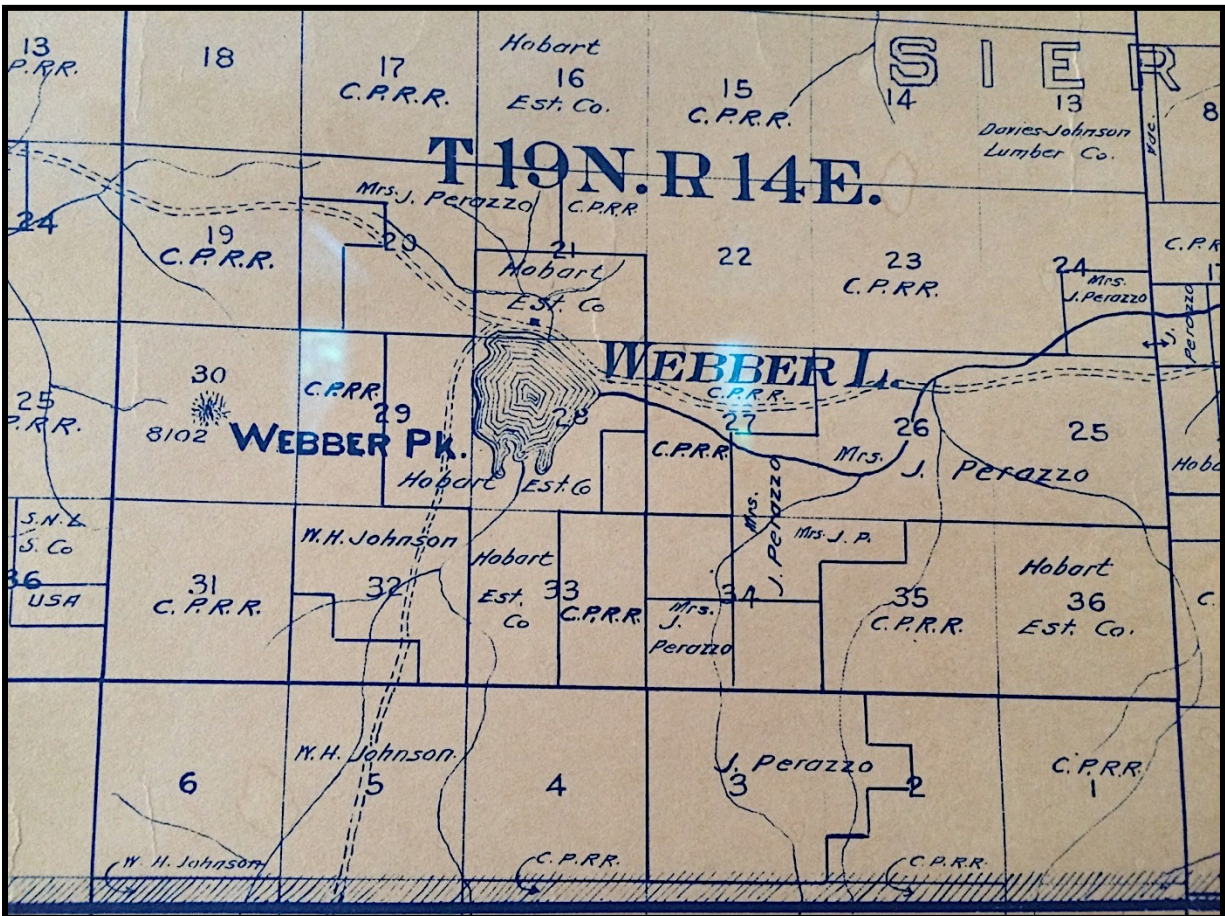


Source: Webber Lake Hotel, looking west at the c.1900 Bohemian Fly Caster's Apartments. Image located in the Webber Lake Hotel, Sierra County.

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FIGURE 16. WEBBER LAKE, TOWNSHIP 19 NORTH, RANGE 14 EAST, 1935



Source: "Township 19 North, Range 14 East" Map of Webber Lake. Located in the Sierra County Courthouse, Downieville, California.

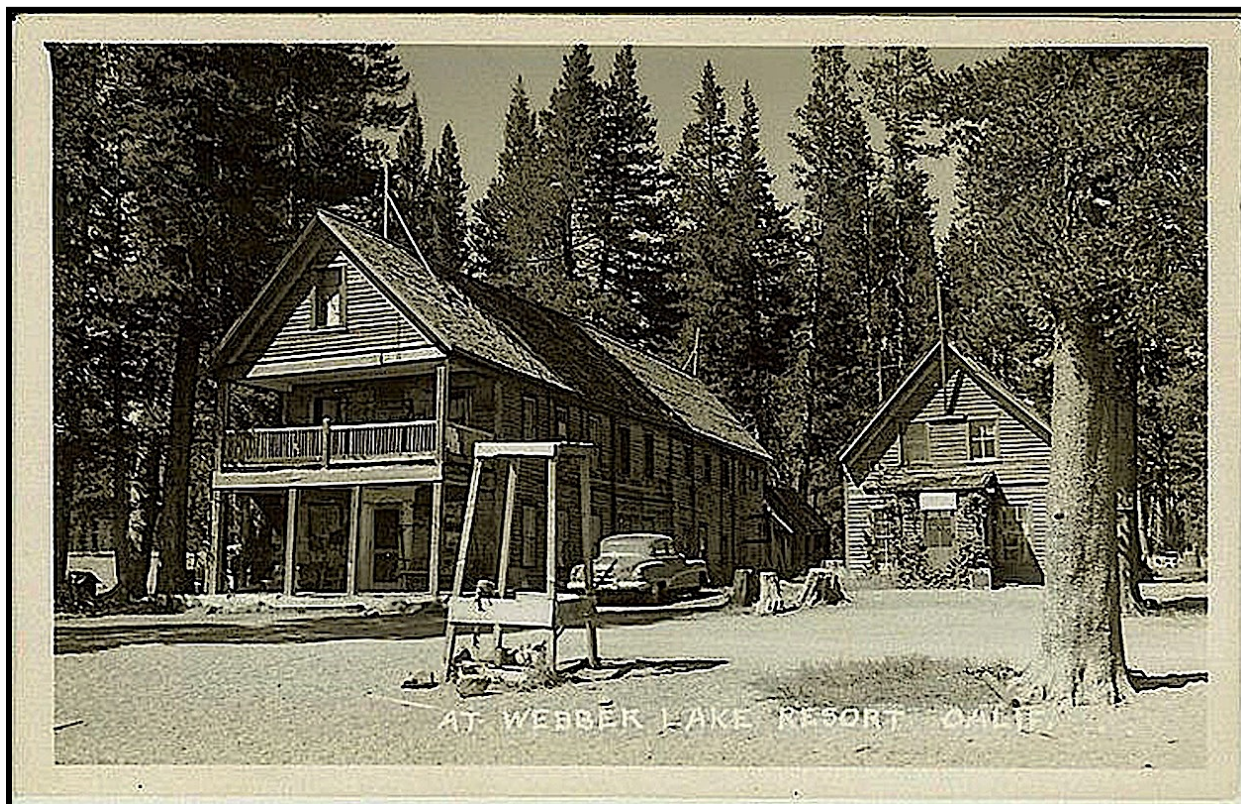
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FIGURE 17. WEBBER LAKE HOTEL, c.1950



Source: Webber Lake Hotel and Way Station, c.1950. Located on Pinterest.com, and accessed January 5, 2018 at <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/494551602803805388/>.

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FIGURE 18. WEBBER LAKE HOTEL, 1984



Source: Photograph located in the Webber Lake Hotel, Sierra County

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PHOTOGRAPHS--WEBBER LAKE HOTEL, SIERRA COUNTY, CA



Photo 1 of 19: Webber Lake Station, south elevation, looking northeast



Photo 2 of 19: Webber Lake Hotel, south elevation, looking northeast

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Photo 3 of 19: Webber Lake Hotel doorway entrance, looking north



Photo 4 of 19: Webber Lake Hotel east elevation, looking northwest

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Photo 5 of 19: Webber Lake Hotel northeast corner of log detail, looking northwest (left)

Photo 6 of 19: Webber Lake Hotel north elevation, looking southwest (right)



Photo 7 of 19: Webber Lake Hotel west elevation, looking east

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Photo 8 of 19: Webber Lake Hotel window, looking west



Photo 9 of 19: Webber Lake Hotel south wall in Room 101, looking south

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Photo 10 of 19: Webber Lake Hotel, Window/Shelf in Room 101, looking west (left)
Photo 11 of 19: Webber Lake Hotel Hallway (Room 106), looking south (right)



Photo 12 of 19: Webber Lake Hotel workshop (Room 107), looking northeast (left)
Photo 13 of 19: Webber Lake Hotel Hallway (Room 201), looking south (right)

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Photo 14 of 19: Webber Lake Hotel sink, shelf, and window in Room 209, looking east (left)
Photo 15 of 19: Webber Lake Hotel 4-panel door in Room 209, looking west (right)



Photo 16 of 19: Webber Lake Hotel attic rafters in Room 307, looking south (left)
Photo 17 of 19: Webber Lake Hotel Pintle/Hinge in Room 103 (right)

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Photo 18 of 19: Webber Lake Hotel Prussian Blue Paint in Room 104



Photo 19 of 19: Dr. D.G. Webber and Joseph Webber gravesites in Mountain View Cemetery, Loyaltan, California