

**HISTORY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF BRIDAL VEIL, OREGON
AND
THE BRIDAL VEIL LUMBERING COMPANY**

REPORT FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY

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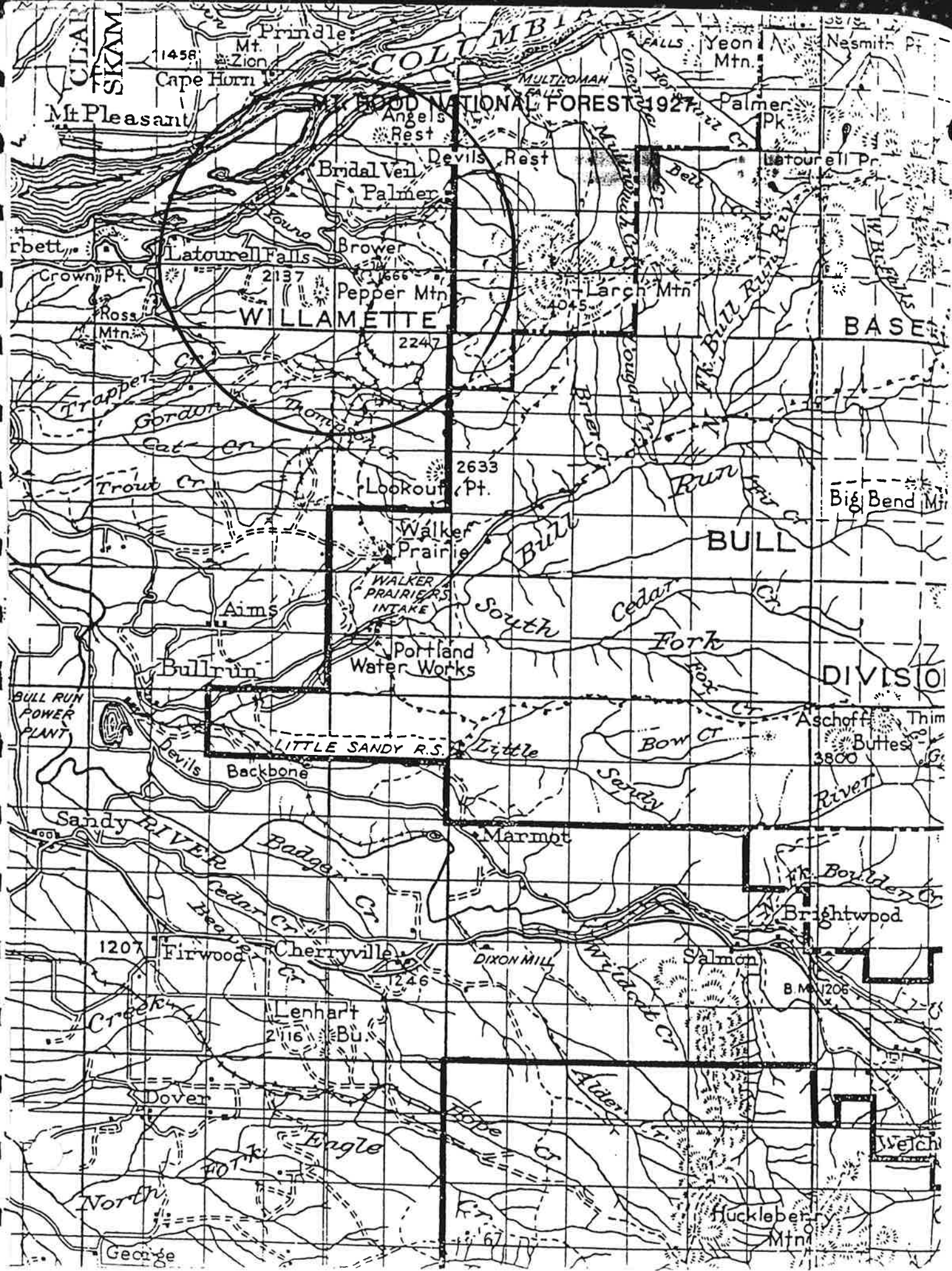
Bridal Veil
NEWS LETTER

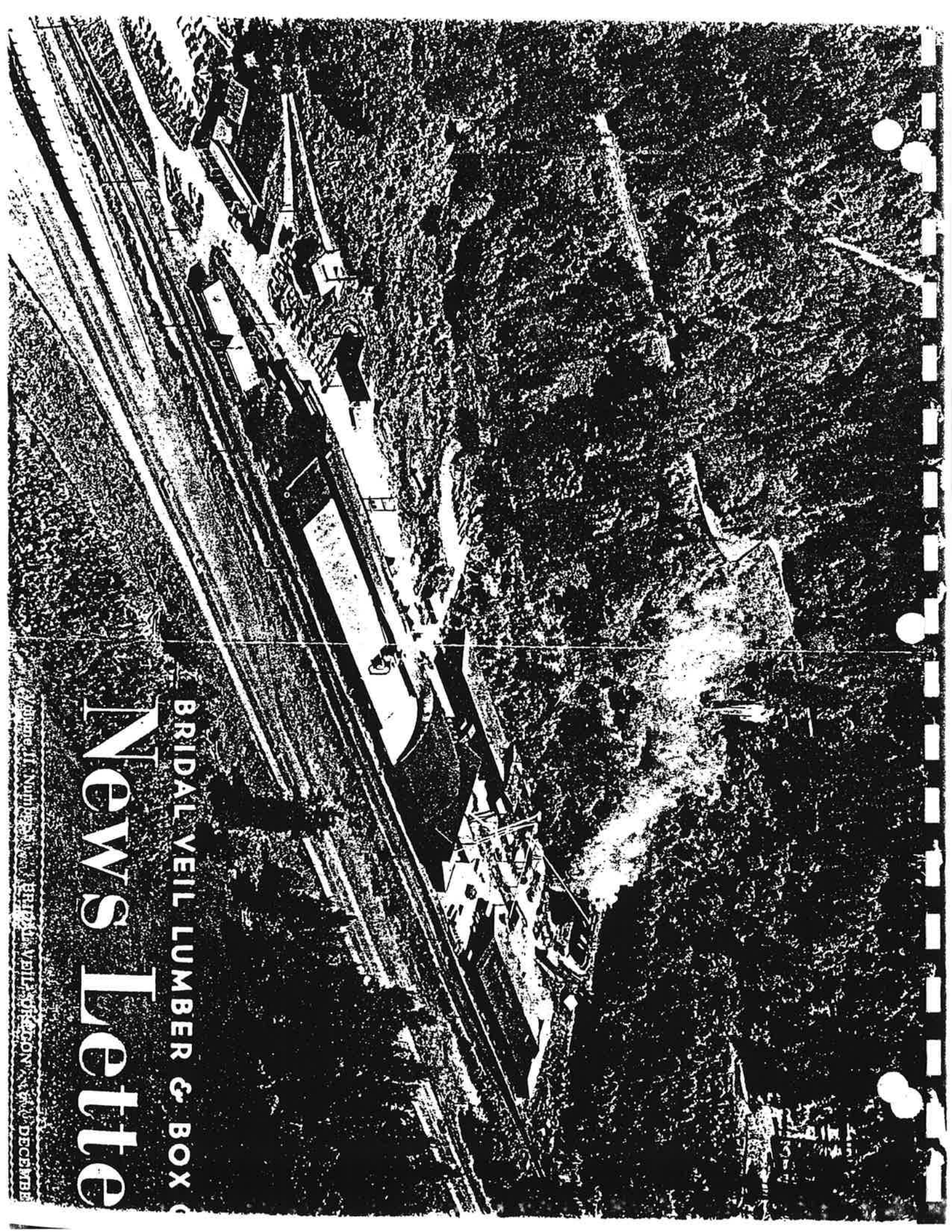
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE OF BRIDAL VEIL, OREGON

Oregonians are proud of their historic, architectural, archaeological, and cultural heritage. They are honored when properties and sites of significance in their community and State are identified in cultural resource inventories or entered into the National Register of Historic Places. The historic buildings in a community are the tangible links with our State and the Nation's heritage. Cultural heritage and natural resources provide a sense of identity, value and stability and help interpret the past to our present and future generations.

Oregon is one of the few states that has its cultural and economic identity closely associated with its magnificent trees and a legacy of the growth and development of the timber industry. The red cedar, hemlock, larch, oak, sugar pine, yellow pine and the Oregon pine grew in a variety of localities around the state, where the natural conditions perpetrated their luxurious growth. The forest lands west of the Cascade Mountain Range in Oregon are generally more dense and difficult to access, especially the thick forests which grew along the steep hills and canyons lining the Columbia River Gorge. At one time, the majestic red fir and the gigantic sugar pine trees grew in thick clusters throughout the Larch Mountain area.

For over 100 years, the small picturesque community of Bridal Veil, Oregon, has been identified with the lumber and wood products industry. Bridal Veil is a small company mill town located along the south banks of the Columbia River. Today, the community of Bridal Veil contains thirteen homes of mill workers and company managers, a post office, mill site, log pond, church/community hall and historic cemetery, which continue to interpret the heritage of an Oregon logging and sawmill Company town.

Bridal Veil is historically and culturally significant for several reasons. Bridal Veil is the earliest remaining Company lumber mill town in the state of Oregon that still portrays its sense of community and the hierarchy of a Company town.. Bridal Veil contains the oldest

remaining collective examples of mill workers cottages, managers homes, a community hall, church, and post office associated with an Oregon Company town located in the the Columbia Gorge.

Bridal Veil had one of the first paper mills in Oregon. Many of the “first” logging techniques and designs for equipment needed to log the dense forests on Larch Mountain were invented and developed at Bridal Veil. Bridal Veil’s identity and significance began and remains with the economic development of the Oregon timber industry, traditional cultural values, events and settlement patterns of communities in the Columbia Gorge.

Bridal Veil has evolved as a Company mill town since the 1880’s, when the first paper mill was established on Bridal Veil Creek, followed by the Bridal Veil Falls Lumbering Company logging and lumber mill on Larch Mountain and the establishment of a planing mill at Bridal Veil. Bridal Veil is also significant as one of earliest remaining examples of Company mill towns which reflect the growth and importance of the logging industry to the Columbia Gorge, the state of Oregon and the Pacific Northwest. Although devoid of the planing mill and other original mill buildings, the Bridal Veil community continues to reflect the community settlement. Bridal Veil conveys the cultural, social, historic and economic development of people living in an isolated company lumber and sawmill town in Oregon.

Bridal Veil’s historic and cultural significance is enhanced by the fact that Oregonians have overlooked the educational importance of interpreting the heritage of their timber and lumber industry. Limited examples of Oregon’s lumber industry heritage remain available for the public to enjoy today. Bridal Veil’s significance is further enhanced when the cultural heritage landscape is combined with the important archaeological heritage of the Palmer Mill Site, other logging camps, wagon roads, and communities that remain to interpret the lumbering history of Larch Mountain. Bridal Veil is also significant for its association with several prominent Northwest lumbermen who have owned or managed the various Bridal Veil Lumber Companies.

Although the Bridal Veil mill workers houses are small vernacular structures, they evolved over time as financial conditions changed with ownership of the Company town. The houses are culturally significant and convey the hardworking lifestyle of the Company mill workers and their families. The mill workers houses have been neglected and should be restored as soon as possible to reflect their historic significance. The Company manager's homes located next to the Columbia Gorge Scenic Highway maintain their dominance on the hillside. The managers houses have been neglected and should be secured and restored as soon as possible to their former elegance. The Post Office has served many historic functions in the history of the Company town and should be preserved and restored. The Post Office provides a sense of community identity and should be kept open for the public to use and enjoy. The community hall/church should continue to serve the public needs and be preserved as a bridal chapel, church, and community center. The historic cemetery should be fenced, marked and cared for in perpetuity. The mill site, not including the existing metal buildings, should be preserved and interpreted through signage and pathways. Original timbers should be salvaged and incorporated in any future buildings the community may restore. All wooden mill buildings should be photographed and recorded before any demolition is permitted. If intensive investigation demonstrates that the mill buildings are in stable condition and historically significant, they should be preserved. No earth should be removed from the paper mill, planing mill site, or sites associated with the Company town until a complete archaeological investigation has been conducted.

Many communities in Oregon contribute their heritage to the development of the lumber industry. Unfortunately, few traces of early logging communities remain to be interpreted to the public. Bridal Veil is the oldest remaining lumber community in Oregon which still possesses enough of the original homes, buildings and sites necessary to interpret the social, cultural and settlement patterns of people living and working in the lumber industry on Larch Mountain in the Columbia Gorge.