

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. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Brainerd and Northern Minnesota/Minnesota and International Railway Depot

other names/site number Burlington Northern Depot and Pine River Railway Depot

2. Location

street & number Minnesota Highway 371 and Barclay Avenue

N/A	not for publication
N/A	vicinity

city or town Pine River

state Minnesota code MN county Cass code 021 zip code 56474

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 local

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government _____

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 _____

Brainerd and Northern Minnesota/Minnesota and
International Railway Depot
Name of Property

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County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- Private
- public – Local
- public – State
- public - Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

TRANSPORTATION: rail related

WORK IN PROGRESS

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

NO STYLE

foundation: CONCRETE

walls: WOOD

roof: WOOD shingle

other: Chimneys BRICK

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Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The Brainerd and Northern Minnesota (B&NM)/Minnesota and International (M&I) Railway Depot is situated on the southern corner of the intersection of Minnesota Highway 371 (also known as Front Street) and Barclay Avenue in Pine River, Minnesota. The downtown business area is located along Barclay Avenue, which runs southwest to northeast and is perpendicular to Mn. Hwy. 371, which runs southeast to northwest. Contemporary, commercial development is situated along Mn. Hwy. 371, across from the depot.

The Brainerd and Northern Minnesota Railway Depot was originally constructed in 1895. Little is known about the development of this building. It is believed to have been a single room temporary structure that may have been razed or incorporated into the 1896 depot. In 1896 a 40'x18' structure was erected and is considered to be the second phase of development. Sometime between 1902 and 1910 the depot freight room was expanded and the length of the building was extended to 60 feet. The depot reached its maximum dimension of 18' x 84' in 1913. The most recent changes to the depot occurred in 2009 when the depot was relocated approximately 75 feet from its original location and was built on a concrete block foundation with a full basement. At this time the depot underwent an extensive exterior rehabilitation representing the 1913 configuration. Currently, the depot features a side gable roof with open eaves, sawn cedar shingles and two chimneys with corbelled caps (Photo No. 1). Other aspects of the exterior include wood drop-siding, double-hung windows with wood sills and plain wood trim and a combination of single entry and sliding freight doors, two chimneys with corbelled caps (Photo No. 1, 2). The building has a uniform appearance and is modest in design. The depot is not open to the public for use at this time.

Narrative Description

See continuation sheet.

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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.)

- 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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

TRANSPORTATION

Period of Significance

1896-1941

Significant Dates

1896

1902-1910

1913

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- 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.

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance reflects the time frame the depot was operated by the B&NM/M&I between 1896 and 1941. The Northern Pacific purchased the M&I in 1941 due to foreclosure. Railroad service had declined in Pine River by this date, thus the depot no longer continued to contribute to the growth and development of Pine River.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

The depot was moved from its original location on the northeast side of the railroad track to the southwest side due to the pending expansion of Minnesota Highway 371. Although moved a short distance from its original location, the depot still

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retains its historical setting and should be considered for the National Register on the merits of its significance to the history of transportation and the settlement of Pine River.

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The Brainerd & Northern Minnesota (B&NM)/Minnesota & International (M&I) Railway depot is historically significant for its role in the development of Pine River, Minnesota. In 1894, the B&NM began construction of a new logging railroad in the Mississippi River headwaters region and by 1895 it was considered to be the “greatest logging railroad in the world”.¹ By providing a stimulus for the expansion of the logging and lumber industry and by facilitating transportation links to other areas of the region, the arrival of the B&NM signaled the dawn of a new era. As the railroad developed north of Brainerd to Leech Lake, many towns sprang up along the line. A major development on the line was evolution of a local trading post known as Barclay’s Ranch into what is now Pine River. Barclay’s Ranch was located aside the south fork of the Pine River and would find itself positioned in the right-of-way of the incoming B&NM railroad line. The establishment of the B&NM through the ranch and the subsequent development of a hotel adjacent to the railroad quickly established it as a thriving townsite on the railroad line ranking it third in development behind the more prosperous and flourishing towns of Brainerd and Lathrop. Pine River was incorporated in 1901 and was platted in relation to the railroad in such a manner as to accommodate the preexisting depot and hotel. The development of Pine River continued to escalate with the expansion of the railroad. The B&NM Railway depot displays local significance during the period 1896 – 1941 and is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A: Transportation. The B&NM railway depot is also significant within the Minnesota Statewide thematic context Northern Minnesota Lumbering (1870-1930’s).

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

See continuation sheet.

¹ F. A. King, Minnesota Logging Railroads: A Pictorial History of the Era When White Pine and the Logging Railroad Reigned Supreme (San Marion, Calif.: Golden West Books, 1981), 53.

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Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been Requested)
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- 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: Minnesota Historical Society

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): CA-PRC-006

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

NADZ 27

1	<u>15</u>	<u>392420</u>	<u>5174450</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

3	_____	_____	_____
	Zone	Easting	Northing

2	_____	_____	_____
	Zone	Easting	Northing

4	_____	_____	_____
	Zone	Easting	Northing

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

Lots 1 and 2, Block 1, Dawes 3rd Addition, Pine River, Minnesota

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Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The nominated property includes the parcel of land which the depot was relocated to in 2009. This parcel is adjacent to the former railroad track and is in close proximity to the original location. The location retains its historic setting and provides perspective of an operational railroad depot along the former B&NM/M&I railway in Pine City during its period of significance.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Debra Kellner

organization _____ date January 2012

street & number 2729 S. Lake Ave. telephone 218 727-3707

city or town Duluth state MN zip code 55802

e-mail dkpk@clearwire.net

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets:** Section 7, Pages 1-4; Section 8, Pages 1-5, Section 9, Page 1, Additional Documentation, Pages 1-4.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

See continuation sheet

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Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name _____
street & number _____ telephone _____
city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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 18 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.

DRAFT

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Brainerd and Northern Minnesota/Minnesota and International Railway Depot
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NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The Brainerd & Northern Minnesota (B&NM)/Minnesota and International (M&I) Railway Depot is situated on a level lot near the heart of Pine River's commercial district along Mn. Hwy. 371 at the south corner of the Barclay Avenue intersection. The depot is adjacent to the Chamber of Commerce building and a covered picnic shelter along the southwest side of the Paul Bunyan Trail, formerly the B&NM railroad track. In 2009 the depot was relocated approximately 75 feet from its original setting on the northeast side of the former railroad track to the southwest side of the current recreational trail. During the move the building was rotated 180° allowing the primary or front façade to remain facing the former railroad track, now recreational trail. The relocation included the addition of a full basement constructed of concrete block walls and a 5" concrete slab floor. The primary entrance to the basement is an interior stairwell located in the north corner of the building in an area formerly functioning as the women's waiting room (Photo No. 11). A secondary entrance consisting of a narrow stairway leading to a ground level cellar-style door is situated on the southeast wall (Photo No. 3).

The northeast façade features a bay window under a front gable roof near the north corner of the building. A metal signal-lantern fixture is positioned above two windows. The 2/2 double-hung windows rest on a continuous wood sill and each sidewall contains a single 2/2 double-hung window (Photo No. 1). Continuing along the façade toward the east corner of the building is a single 2/2 double-hung window, a single door with a glazed transom, a sliding freight door and single door near the east corner. This corner door is not original to the building and was added sometime prior to 1913 (Photo No. 2).²

The southeast wall features a solid wall of drop siding and is without fenestration or doorways with the exception of the recently added ground-level bulkhead access doors. A white and black painted wood sign which reads PINE RIVER is situated under the gable.

The southwest wall features a sliding freight door with a glazed transom near the southern section of the building (Photo No. 4). Continuing along the wall is a single 2/2 double-hung window, a single door with glazed transom, two 2/2 double-hung windows, a single door and a single 2/2 double-hung window at the northern corner of the building (Photo No. 5, 6).

The northwest wall features two symmetrically placed 2/2 double-hung windows. A canopy with a finished wood ceiling extends over a wood platform. The canopy features a gabled roof supported by square posts and cross beam supports. Square balusters and a square handrail are positioned between the support posts on the northwest section of the platform. A white and black painted wood sign which reads PINE RIVER is situated under the gable (Photo No. 7).

The interior of the building consists of a women's waiting room in the northwest section of the building.

² Douglas A. Birk, "Some Observations Regarding the Historic Pine River Railroad Depot," prepared for Heritage Group North, Pine River, Minnesota, 2005, 13.

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The office is positioned between the women’s waiting room and the main waiting room. The freight room extends past the main waiting room to the southeast end of the building. The interior walls in the women’s waiting room, office and main waiting room retain the original configuration of vertical lower and horizontal upper beadboard. The ceilings are also clad with narrow beadboard (Photo No. 9, 10). The tongue-and-groove oak strip flooring in the office and main waiting room was salvaged from the original building before the relocation. The countertop on a desk built into the bay window retains a linoleum surface believed original to its installation in 1913 (Photo No. 12).

The southeast section of the interior consists of the freight room and features two large sliding freight doors on opposite walls. The door on the southwest wall features a glazed transom and the original iron hardware. The freight door on the northeast wall has been modified and no longer displays the transom window; the replacement door is taller and accommodates a larger opening. The northwest section of the freight room was formerly occupied by the depot office. The southeast wall and wooden floor of that original space were early removed to sizably expand the freight room. The wall and ceiling material in this section of the freight room are from the original office space and are the same as appear in the main and women’s waiting rooms and the present office. The southeast section of the freight room features exposed roof trusses and stud walls, a characteristic original to the building’s construction. The expansion of the southeast end of the freight room in 1913 is distinguished by exposed trusses, stud walls, king studs and sheathing boards. The original (circa 1896) construction exhibits random-width sheathing boards and more closely spaced rafters. The later addition has common-width wall sheathing and more widely spaced rafters. The original dirt floor was later replaced with a concrete slab and the wide plank wood floors were added in 2009. The southeastern wall shows evidence of where an overhead garage door was installed, likely in the mid to late 20th century. The overhead garage door has since been removed. The former opening is not visible from the exterior.

Rehabilitation and Alteration

The depot has evolved over time due to the developing needs of the railroad industry, local and regional commerce and the community itself. The first depot on the original site was constructed in 1895. Very little is known about this structure. It may have been demolished when the 1896 structure was erected or it may be part of the current building. It was considered a “temporary one room station”.³ Alterations dating back to 1896 are documented by historic photographs and newspapers and by evidence observed in the standing structure itself.⁴

³ Birk, “Some Observations Regarding the Historic Pine River Railway Depot,” 4.

⁴ Douglas Birk, former resident of Pine River and Archeologist/Historian prepared the document “Some Observations Regarding the Historic Pine River Railway Depot,” September 2005. In a written narrative and citing historic photographs, he carefully outlines the changes to the building between 1895 and 2005. The timeline that follows in this text came primarily from his documentation and from newspaper articles. Also note the directional references; the alterations listed were prior to the relocation of the building and reflect the position of the building at that time.

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The 1896 depot is considered to be the second phase of development. The structure measured 18’ x 40’ and was built on railroad ties. A hand drawn map indicating the 1898 configuration depicts the depot with a central bay window on the southwest façade facing the railroad tracks. (Refer to Continuation Sheet, Section: Additional Documentation, Page 3). This drawing also indicates the presence of stairs on all four corners of the deck and at the south end of the station platform. At this date the depot featured one brick chimney. The interior compartments of the depot included the freight room at the northwest end of the building, the centrally located office with bay window, and the waiting room to the southeast. During this time period the building had two freight doors each with a glazed transom, and nine double-hung windows situated in the office and waiting room areas.

The first known photo of the depot dates to 1902 and depicts the depot with sawn wood shingles and a centrally located brick chimney protruding from an area of the interior wall between the waiting room and office. There is no visible PINE RIVER station sign below the gable on the southeast wall.⁵

Sometime between 1902 and 1910, in the third phase of development, an addition to the northwest end of the freight room extended the length of the building to 60 feet. By 1910 the station platform was an earthen structure topped with cinders and sided with wood planking.

The final phase of depot construction in 1913 resulted in an overall space of 18’ x 84’. A new office and women’s waiting room were added to the southeast end of the building. The original office became part of the expanded freight room; the wood floor in the old office was removed and replaced by concrete and the interior wall between the original office and freight room was removed. The bay window was relocated to the southeast section of the building and the shed-style roof extension was replaced with a front facing gable roof extension (Photo No. 1). Also new to the building was a second brick chimney with a corbelled cap and another entry door facing the railroad tracks on the western corner of the southwest façade. A canopy at the southeast end of the depot featured a front gable roof with three vertical support posts. Balustrades extended between the support posts to form a handrail with square balusters (Photo No. 7). The station platform was widened, capped with brick, and enclosed with concrete curbing. Steps were located at the southeast and northeast ends of the platform. A photograph c. 1917 shows a door positioned on the southwest wall and providing access to the women’s waiting room.⁶ A white on black PINE RIVER station sign is situated on each gable end. At this time the building was painted boxcar red (Photo No. 3, 7).

A 1961 photograph shows the doorway to the women’s waiting room is obscured behind a new layer of siding applied to the trackside exterior wall.⁷ Today, part of the former doorway opening can still be seen from the interior on the basement stairwell on the northeast wall (Photo No. 11). The sliding freight door facing the track has been replaced; the new door is taller and lacks a glazed transom (Photo No. 2). It appears the two brick chimneys had been rebuilt as they no longer display corbelled caps

⁵ Birk, “Some Observations Regarding the Historic Pine River Railway Depot,” 8.

⁶ Birk, “Some Observations Regarding the Historic Pine River Railway Depot,” 19.

⁷ Birk, “Some Observations Regarding the Historic Pine River Railway Depot,” 28.

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(Photo No. 1). The chimney on the southeast section of the building appears to have been moved to a new location near the waiting room at the southeast end of the building. During this time period the depot was painted two-tone brown, the colors of the Northern Pacific.

The canopy on the southeast wall was still present in 1961. It is not known when it was removed, however photographic evidence shows it was not in place in 1975 (Birk, "Some Observations Regarding the Historic Pine River Depot", 28). By 1970, indoor plumbing was added and the two brick chimneys were replaced with a single metal flue attached to a heating stove located within the original waiting room. A large overhead style garage door was installed on the northeast wall during the ownership by the Burlington Northern sometime after 1970. During this time period the depot was painted white and green, the colors of Burlington Northern. Rail service was suspended in 1985 and by 1987 the tracks were pulled.

In 2009, the depot was relocated approximately 75 feet from the northeast side of the former railroad track (now the Paul Bunyan Trail), to the southwest side of the trail. A local contractor served as project manager and worked with an architectural firm and the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office (MN SHPO) to carry out the rehabilitation which returned the depot to its 1913 configuration. Work on the building included stabilization of the structure for relocation, construction of a new foundation and basement, construction of a new floor truss system in the freight room replacing the original concrete floor, repair and some replacement of the exterior siding and doors and replacement of all windows. Many of the platform bricks, originally from the Streator Brick Co., Streator, IL were salvaged and reused. However, it was necessary to acquire additional pavers to recreate the platform. The new pavers were salvaged from a former railroad depot and are congruent with the original material. The roof was covered with sawn, cedar shingles and replica brick chimneys with corbelled caps were constructed. The canopy was recreated on the northwest wall (Photo No. 1, 6, 7). The ground level bulkhead access doors on the southeast wall provide emergency egress from the new basement and are a concession to safety (Photo No. 3).⁸

The work completed in 2009 is a very good example of rehabilitation of the structure focusing on the materials and configuration from 1913. The changes made did not adversely affect the integrity of the building and did in fact bring the building back to the 1913 exterior appearance. The Heritage Group North is committed to the sensitive and age-appropriate rehabilitation of the structure maintaining the historical and architectural integrity of the depot using compatible materials and replicating former design. While the depot was physically removed from its original location, the setting of the depot along the Paul Bunyan Trail is reflective of the former setting along the railroad track. The historic character and defining features have been meticulously addressed in the 2009 rehabilitation.

Although the building is currently unoccupied, plans include additional renovation of the interior of the building. It is anticipated that the future use of the depot will be a museum or cultural center.

⁸ Interview with Rick Hlebain, Project Manager, Gopher State Construction, contracting firm for the 2009 renovation.

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Statement of Significance

Pine River is located in the heart of what was once northern Minnesota’s abundant white pine stands. Logging of the white pine in the Pine River area began during the 1870s, and the upper Pine River watercourse was the scene of extensive logging operations in the 1880s. At that time, virtually all logs moved from forest to mill via lake and river systems. Consequently, the only stands that could be profitably harvested were those proximal to the waterways. With the advent of the rail based logging, so came significant expansion of the lumbering industry throughout northern Minnesota. Uncut stands of pine were now accessible for logging as the local waterways for log transport were minimized or rendered obsolete. The route of the railroad extended primarily through prime pine forests making available vast tracts of land not only for loggers but their settlement camps and the resultant townsite development.

While timber was the commodity that first attracted large scale investment and people into Minnesota’s pine wilderness, it was the railroad that opened up the territory. On May 9, 1892 the Brainerd & Northern Minnesota (B&NM) Railroad was organized. Soon after, it purchased land from the Northern Mill Company and immediately began construction of a new logging railroad in the Mississippi Headwaters Region. The railroad line would consist initially of two sections: the southern division from Brainerd to Gilpatrick Station and the northern division incorporating the former Northern Mill’s Minnesota Logging Railroad northwest of Gilpatrick.⁸ By 1893 plans were laid for the extension of the railroad to Leech Lake along the old Leech Lake Trail following a route used by Native Americans and fur traders. The line promised to haul lumber and become a trunk line “leading to the northwest”.⁹ As the rails progressed from Brainerd to Leech Lake, towns sprang up along the new main line shaping development patterns across northern Minnesota. The railroad expanded its service to include passenger and freight and by 1902 the railroad became a common carrier.¹⁰ At its completion, the railroad passed through six counties from the southerly Crow Wing north through Cass, Hubbard, Beltrami and Koochiching and a small section of Itasca County. In each of these counties, railroad depots were built giving way to emerging townsites along the B&NM and later the M&I railroad.

Few settlements existed between Brainerd and Leech Lake before the establishment of the railroad. One important exception is the outpost developed by George Barclay. George Barclay purchased 840 acres of land in 1873 and established a small trading post along the Leech Lake Trail aside the south fork of the Pine River.¹¹ Two years later he expanded his operations and moved the outpost to higher ground in

⁸ Citizens of Pine River, Logsleds to Snowmobiles: A Centennial History of Pine River, Minnesota, ed. Norman F. Clarke (Pine River, Minnesota, 1979), 78.

⁹ Carol Zellie, “Historic Context Study for the Brainerd and Northern Minnesota Railway (B&NM) and Minnesota and International Railway (M&I), Brainerd to International Falls, Minnesota”, submitted to Minnesota Department of Transportation, 2007, 16-17.

¹⁰ Citizens of Pine River, Logsleds to Snowmobiles: A Centennial History of Pine River, Minnesota, 84-92.

¹¹ Citizens of Pine River, Logsleds to Snowmobiles: A Centennial History of Pine River, Minnesota, 475.

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an area approximately one mile north of the original site along the Pine River and established “Barclay’s Ranch”. Together with his wife Amarilla, they ran the ranch as a farm, halfway house and logging camp. The original development included three buildings: store, halfway house and their home. Later the ranch expanded with Barclay’s interests in fur trade, logging activities and farming. Additional buildings were constructed on land encompassing four quarter sections of land, essentially the boundaries of what would become the city of Pine River.¹² In 1877 a post office was established with George Barclay as the first postmaster.¹³ In 1894, as the B&NM was expanding north of Brainerd, surveyors for the railroad ran their right-of-way through Barclay’s Ranch.¹⁴ The location of the railway on the ranch was to become a boom for Barclay, the ranch site and the future development of Pine River.

As the railroad expanded through the ranch, Barclay was forced to give a portion of his land to the railroad; however, he crafted an exchange of land for the purchase of his buildings which were situated in the right-of-way. Soon after the survey, and with great foresight, he contracted with a local gentleman named I. U. White to build a hotel with a store and saloon at his ranch along the projected railroad line. Upon construction of the railroad through his ranch, the B&NM established an agency office in one of Barclay’s old ranch houses. The following year the B&NM constructed a depot aside the mainline, just across the road from the Barclay Hotel. The depot and hotel at Barclay’s Ranch was the impetus for the ranch to become a major stop between Brainerd and Lathrop, the northern terminus of the line, and served as a catalyst for the future expansion in Pine River.¹⁵ Pine River was incorporated as a village on December 5, 1901 and was platted and laid out in relation to the existing railroad using the depot and hotel as the cornerstone of the new city grid. Had the railroad not been established at this time, it can be argued that the City of Pine River may not have come into existence.¹⁶ Barclay’s vision and foresight almost immediately assured the status of a major rural townsite on the B&NM Ry, outranked only by Brainerd and Lathrop.¹⁷

During the years 1900-1910 the community expanded with the presence of the railroad. Pine River served as an outlet for agricultural and lumber products and had a grain elevator, creamery, pickle factory. Buildings erected along the railroad included the Barclay Hotel, general store, saloon, boarding house, school, barbershop, land office and newspaper. The 1900 census shows 190 residents were living in Pine River, and in the wake of a building boom between the years 1903-1904 the City Hall was completed along with the establishment of a second newspaper, hotel, bank, sawmill, carpentry shop, land office, restaurant and bakery, and a watch and jewelry repair shop. The town also had a doctor and its own pharmacy. Development continued and the population continued to increase. Census schedules

¹² Citizens of Pine River, Logsleds to Snowmobiles: A Centennial History of Pine River, Minnesota, 105.

¹³ Warren Upham, Minnesota Place Names: A Geographic Encyclopedia, 3rd ed., (St. Paul, Minnesota: Minnesota Historical Society), 2001.

¹⁴ Citizens of Pine River, Logsleds to Snowmobiles: A Centennial History of Pine River, Minnesota, 84.

¹⁵ Citizens of Pine River, Logsleds to Snowmobiles: A Centennial History of Pine River, Minnesota, 481.

¹⁶ “Pine River History,” www.pineriverhistory.org

¹⁷ Citizens of Pine River, Logsleds to Snowmobiles: A Centennial History of Pine River, Minnesota, 84.

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in 1910 reveal a population of 329 and indicate a number of the residents were Swedish, Norwegian, and Finnish immigrants employed in not only railroad related jobs but more abundantly in the community as grocers, bankers, contractors, merchants and the like. By 1920 the population had risen to 442. As Pine River was clearly expanding, the growth was attributed more to agricultural and commercial purposes and less to the logging industry as shown by the car orders between 1920 and 1926. During this time period the types of goods transported included: tractors, cars, piling, empty barrels, lumber, gasoline, brick and cement, lumber, Christmas trees, clover, apples/pears, potatoes, oats, feed, grain, rye, flour.¹⁸

Although the logging industry was diminishing, the railroad continued to be instrumental in the continued development of Pine River. Pine River sprang from trading post to train stop and continued to experience sustained growth due to the influx of passengers from distant areas. The city boasted a “tremendous wave of land development: Iowans ‘come by the droves’.”¹⁹ Many new settlers arriving at the depot brought with them entire households, farm machines and animals in the anticipation of establishing a livelihood for themselves and their families. The following excerpt from an article entitled “Spurrier Land Settlement: The Tough Ones Stayed,” Pine River Journal (Centennial Issue), August 9, 1973, by local resident J.W Wicklund, chronicles a day in the life of a young man observing the constant arrival of people at the depot.

These were good times for our town with the rush of incoming people: felt in business, sales, jobs for everyone and great hopes for the future. For us kids it was something special as we watched daily the unloading of train boxcar after boxcar [i.e., the “immigrant cars”] of entire families and their lifetime accumulation of household goods, items of machinery, but in our interests mostly the livestock, fine animals, especially the large horses coming down the loading ramps. It was a grand thing to see those beautifully matched teams pulling the wagons down our dusty streets as they headed out for their holdings loaded with all their good and the families, their faces happy in their anticipations of their new homes. Cattle and other animals often followed the wagons driven by boys with whom we exchanged guarded glances, but more open ones with the new girls in the wagons.

This incoming of people brought many needs and the supplying of these needs brought a tremendous boost to the economy of the Pine River community. Building materials of all kinds were to be unloaded from the trains and hauled by team to building locations; there were services to be performed, food, clothing, medical, drugs, and other supplies to be sold, blacksmithing, repair of equipment; transportation to be provided and all kinds of related jobs, especially in the construction field.

¹⁸ Northern Pacific Railroad Company Records, Minnesota Historical Society, NP Vol. 4: 137A.16.8.F Pine River.

¹⁹ Citizens of Pine River, Logsleds to Snowmobiles: A Centennial History of Pine River, Minnesota, 156.

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Another article, an editorial in the Timberman, 1888, expresses the fanciful circumstance of a lumber town evolving to a vibrant community: “Who can conceive the possibilities embraced in a logging railway as it winds its tortuous way through the undeveloped regions, leaving immigration to follow in its wake”.

The early growth of Pine River is reflected by the expansion of the depot.²⁰ The Pine River depot evolved in form and function due to the expansion of the railway (a detailed description of the physical changes is outlined in Section 7). In 1901 the B&NM railroad was sold to the Minnesota & International (M&I) Railway Company, an affiliation of the Northern Pacific. By 1908 the M & I reached International Falls, Minnesota, thus completing the rail line. The white pine industry was on a downward trend by 1907 as the resources had rapidly become depleted. In many cases, the towns that developed along with the lumber boom dwindled with the downturn. Not so in Pine River; by 1913 the depot had grown from a modest frame building measuring 18’ x 40’ consisting of a freight room and office and waiting room to a larger structure with additional waiting room and freight space altogether measuring 18’ x 84’ and that, in appearance, closely resembled the depots in the adjoining towns of Jenkins and Backus. However, those depots and most others that once stood on the line of the old B&NM are now gone.²¹

The towns that survived past the decline of the logging industry were often those in Crow Wing and Cass Counties along Mn. Hwy. 371. The highway extended along a corridor of the Leech Lake trail, parallel to the railroad line allowing for continued development and expansion of those townsites.²² While the Village of Pine River continued to expand, the increase in numbers of motor vehicles and the creation of Mn. Hwy. 371 allowed the majority of tourists and vacationers to arrive in Pine River by automobile and truck. Additionally, bus service to Pine River was established in 1917. Although automobile use became a prominent mode of transportation, passenger rail service between Brainerd and International Falls via Pine River continued on a daily basis until the late 1950’s.²³

Although Pine River survived the downturn of the logging industry where other villages and towns waned, Pine River was eager to expand the railroad but did not receive the support from the M&I. In January 1923 the Village Council forwarded a correspondence to Mr. Gemmell, M&I Superintendant in Brainerd, requesting extension of the track at Pine River to provide additional loading facilities for timber products. Due to the arrangement of track and loading facilities there was only room to load two cars of forest products at a time on the south end of the loading track. It was impractical to rearrange loading so more than one party could load without extending the track. Mr. Gemmell considered the

²⁰ Citizens of Pine River, Logsleds to Snowmobiles: A Centennial History of Pine River, Minnesota, 142.

²¹ Douglas Birk, “Chugging Along and On Track: IMA Works to Save a Small Town Railroad Depot” (Draft Article for IMA Newsletter, summer 2001), 2.

²² Carol Zellie, “Historic Context Study for the B&NM and M&I,” 25.

²³ “Minnesota Regional Railroads – 1930s-1940s: Minnesota and International Railway, Bigfork and International Falls Railway,” <http://www.r2parks.net/M&I>.

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request and balanced the cost of the extension against the future of the lumber business. The Village Council believed the track was needed as they forecasted increased lumber shipping for several more years. The railroad did not concur and stated the current track was ample for all business except for occasional timber business in winter time. The railroad would not spend such a large amount of money for additional trackage that would not produce a permanent increase in the business. This lack of support from the M&I foretold the future of the railroad and the decline in use of the depot in Pine River. Subsequently, correspondence of the railroad commission in the early 1930's states the railroad was in financial arrears. The M&I continued to lose revenue and by 1937 the M&I was taken over by the Northern Pacific and then purchased by them in 1941 due to foreclosure.

Further change in ownership occurred on March 2, 1970; the Great Northern, Northern Pacific, and several lesser railroads were merged to form Burlington Northern, Inc., the largest Railroad in the United States.²⁴ The railroad retained a presence and the depot remained operational until 1985 when the railroad left Pine River and the depot was subsequently abandoned. By 1999 the depot was threatened with demolition; the Pine River City Council ordered Burlington Northern, the depot's owner, to fix the building or tear it down.²⁵ Ownership of the building was transferred to the Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT) in December 2000 and the depot was later determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. MnDOT, in consultation with the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office (MN SHPO), conducted an exterior restoration in 2009.²⁶ Local residents and members of the Heritage Group North, a community based non-profit organization, have tirelessly fought to save and restore the historic depot. Their significant and substantial advocacy efforts have not only saved the depot from demolition but also have served to promote the legacy and history of the logging industry in Pine River.

The depot played a central role in the life of Pine River residents by serving as a transportation hub for the lumber and freight industries and also for passenger travel, encouraging settlement, and providing transportation connections to the surrounding area which was previously inaccessible. It remains the oldest extant commercial structure in Pine River.²⁷ Although the building has been moved from its original location on the east side of the former railroad line to the west side of the line that is now known as the Paul Bunyan Trail, the building retains its historic qualities including design, setting, materials, feeling and association. The Pine River depot retained its significance in relation to its association with the transportation industry until 1941 when the Northern Pacific acquired M&I due to foreclosure. The Pine River Depot is eligible for National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A: Transportation.

²⁴ Citizens of Pine River, Logsleds to Snowmobiles: A Centennial History of Pine River, Minnesota, 93.

²⁵ Christine Lupella, "Last Days for the Pine River Depot?" <http://www.pineandlakes.com>, 8 October 2002.

²⁶ Christine Lupella, "Time may be right for moving, restoring old Depot" Pine River Journal, 12 February 2003.

²⁷ Douglas Birk, "Chugging Along and On Track: IMA Works to Save a Small Town Railroad Depot," 1.

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Railway Depot

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Northern Pacific Railway Company Records, Minnesota Historical Society. The following records were searched and/or utilized in compilation of this nomination:

NP Vol. 1: 136.D.7.3.B
NP Vol. 4: 137A.15.5.B files 23-3, 23.5, 23-8
137.A.15.6.7 files 24-22, 24-26
137.A.15.7B file 28-3
137.A.16.1B
137.F.16.8.F Pine River – files 47-1 through 27-16
137.A. 19.6F files 104-53, 104-56, 105-1

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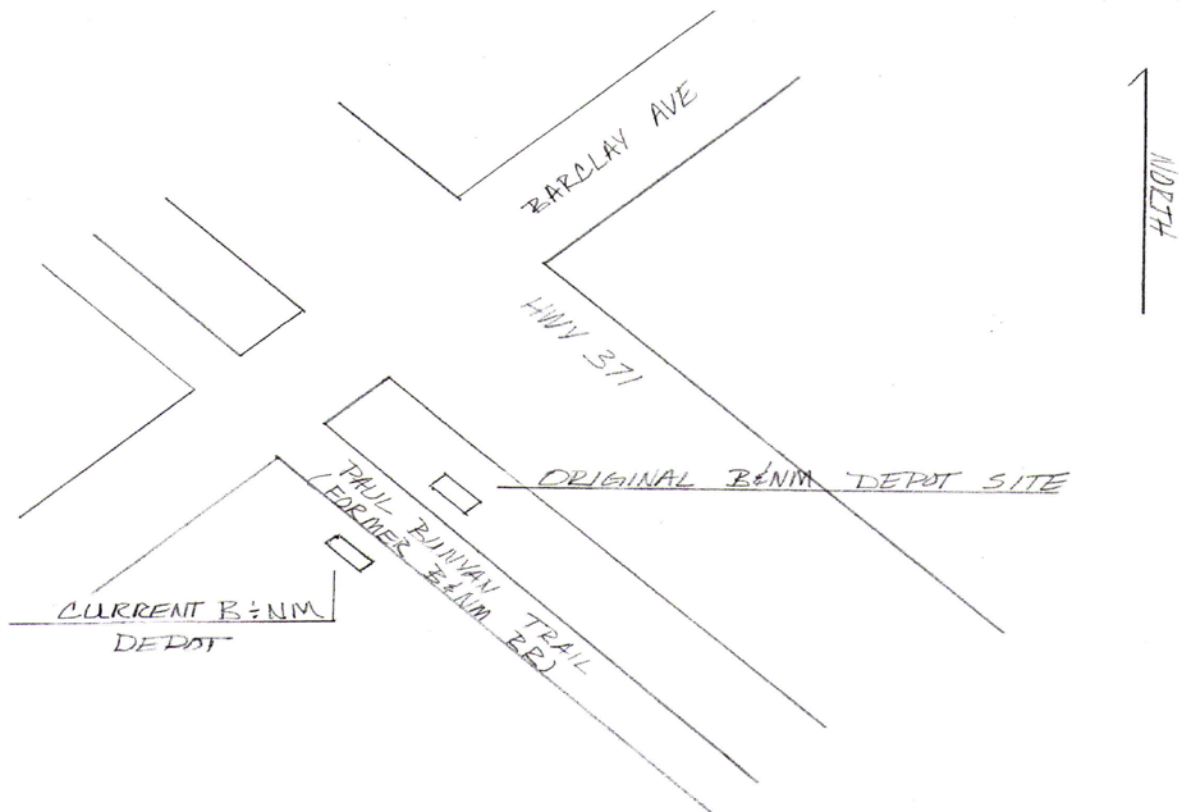
Brainerd and Northern
Minnesota/Minnesota and International
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Sketch map showing the original B&NM Railway depot location northeast of the Paul Bunyan Trail (former B&NM RR) and the relocation of the depot to the southwest side of the Paul Bunyan Trail.



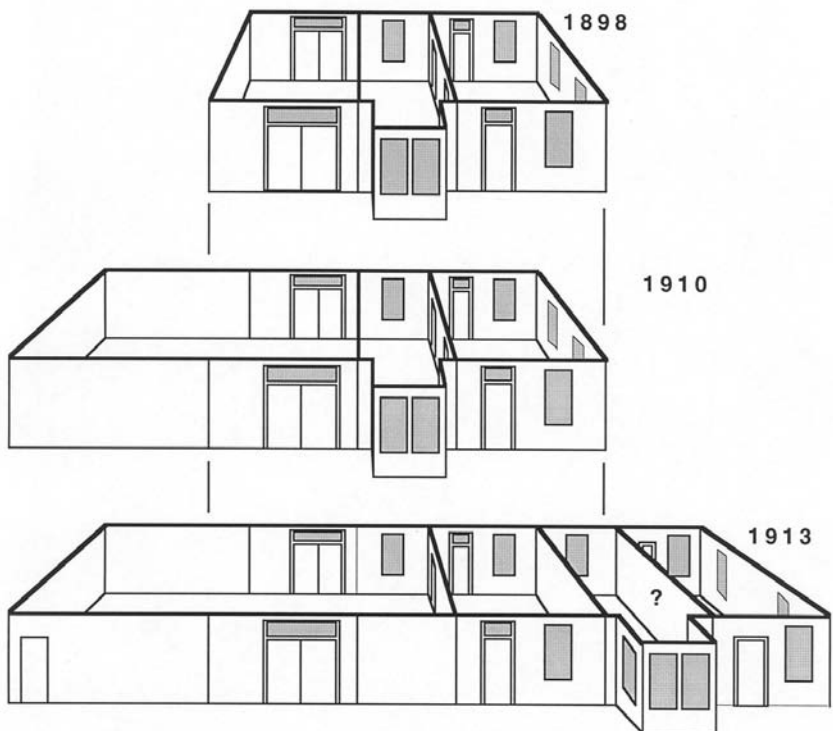
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Diagram depicting the expansion of the depot between 1898 and 1913.
(Reference: Douglas A. Birk, Some Observations Regarding the Historic Pine River Railway Depot, 17)



Development Phases II through IV – Interior views of the Pine River Depot during three major phases of development between the late 1890s and 1913. The 1913 modifications brought the Depot to its maximum dimensions of about 18 x 84 feet (minus the open-air canopy, not shown here).

In 1913 the areas of the original office, the original freight room, and the north addition were consolidated. The northwest “half” of the building thus became a single, open room measuring about 18 x 45 feet. At the same time, the wood floor of the original office was removed (see page 18), and the entire new freight room was furnished with a concrete floor.

A new office and a women’s waiting room were added to the southeast end of the building in 1913. The author has never gained access to the latter compartment, which is presently separated from the office by a sheetrock partition (perhaps installed in 1975, see page 34). The doorway (D8) on the trackside of the women’s waiting room is hidden beneath a new layer of exterior siding.

Today, the southeast “half” of the Depot contains four rooms with wooden floors, including a bathroom facility on the Front Street side of the new office space (see page 30). Preliminary archaeological investigations show that some if not all of the Depot rests on treated timbers.

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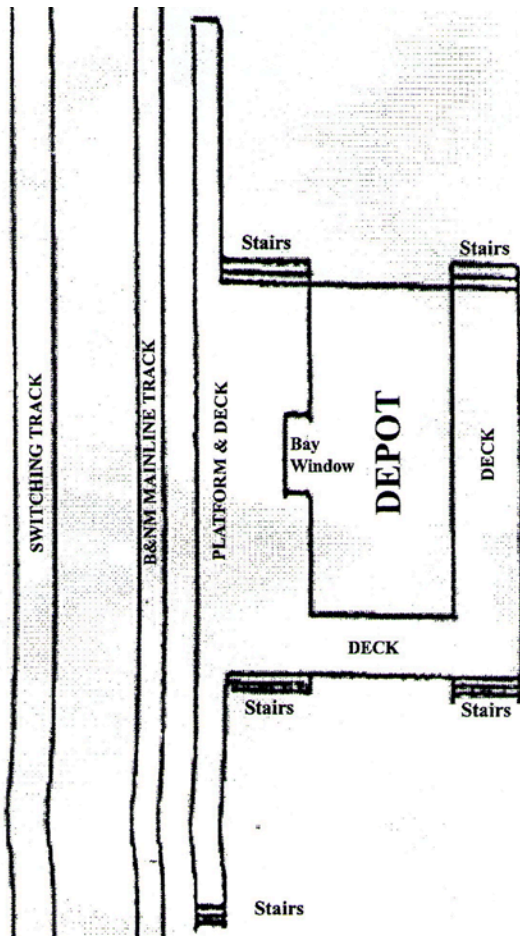
Cass County, Minnesota

County and State

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Hand drawn map showing the depot in 1998.

(Reference: Douglas A. Birk, Some Observations Regarding the Historic Pine River Railway Depot, 5)



1898 Map – American Civil War veteran George Barclay settled on the South Fork Pine River in 1873 and became the founder of what later emerged as the community of Pine River. George and his wife, Ammarilla, welcomed the arrival of the B&NM in 1894 and gave it land for a switchyard.

This map shows the footprint of the Pine River Depot as it appeared in October 1898 at the time of George Barclay’s murder. The Depot has a central bay window. Stairs are positioned at the corners of the decks and at the southeast end of the station platform.

This is believed to represent the second phase of Depot development. Little is known about the initial development, which was said to be a one-room “temporary” structure. That early structure may have been razed or it might form the nucleus or northwest end of the Depot shown here.

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Photographs

Name of Property: Brainerd & Northern Minnesota Railway Depot
 City or Vicinity: Pine River
 County: Cass County
 State: Minnesota
 Photographer: Debra Kellner
 Date Photographed: October 12, 2010
 Location of Original Digital Files: 2729 S. Lake Avenue, Duluth, MN 55802

MN_Cass County_Brainerd & Northern Minnesota Railway Depot_0001
 Northern section of northeast façade. Camera facing southwest.

MN_Cass County_Brainerd & Northern Minnesota Railway Depot_0002
 Southern section of northeast façade. Camera facing southwest.

MN_Cass County_Brainerd & Northern Minnesota Railway Depot_0003
 Southeast elevation. Camera facing northwest.

MN_Cass County_Brainerd & Northern Minnesota Railway Depot_0004
 Southern section of southwest elevation. Camera facing northeast.

MN_Cass County_Brainerd & Northern Minnesota Railway Depot_0005
 Mid-section of southwest elevation. Camera facing northeast.

MN_Cass County_Brainerd & Northern Minnesota Railway Depot_0006
 Northern section of southwest elevation. Camera facing northeast.

MN_Cass County_Brainerd & Northern Minnesota Railway Depot_0007
 Northeast and northwest elevation. Camera facing south.

MN_Cass County_Brainerd & Northern Minnesota Railway Depot_0008
 Interior northeast wall of freight room. Camera facing northeast.

MN_Cass County_Brainerd & Northern Minnesota Railway Depot_0009
 Interior northeast wall of waiting room between office and freight room. Camera facing northeast.

MN_Cass County_Brainerd & Northern Minnesota Railway Depot_0010
 Interior southwest wall of waiting room between office and freight room. Camera facing southwest.

MN_Cass County_Brainerd & Northern Minnesota Railway Depot_0011
 Interior northeast wall of women's waiting room showing entrance to basement and covered exterior door. Camera facing northeast.

MN_Cass County_Brainerd & Northern Minnesota Railway Depot_0012
 Interior northeast wall of office. Camera facing northeast.

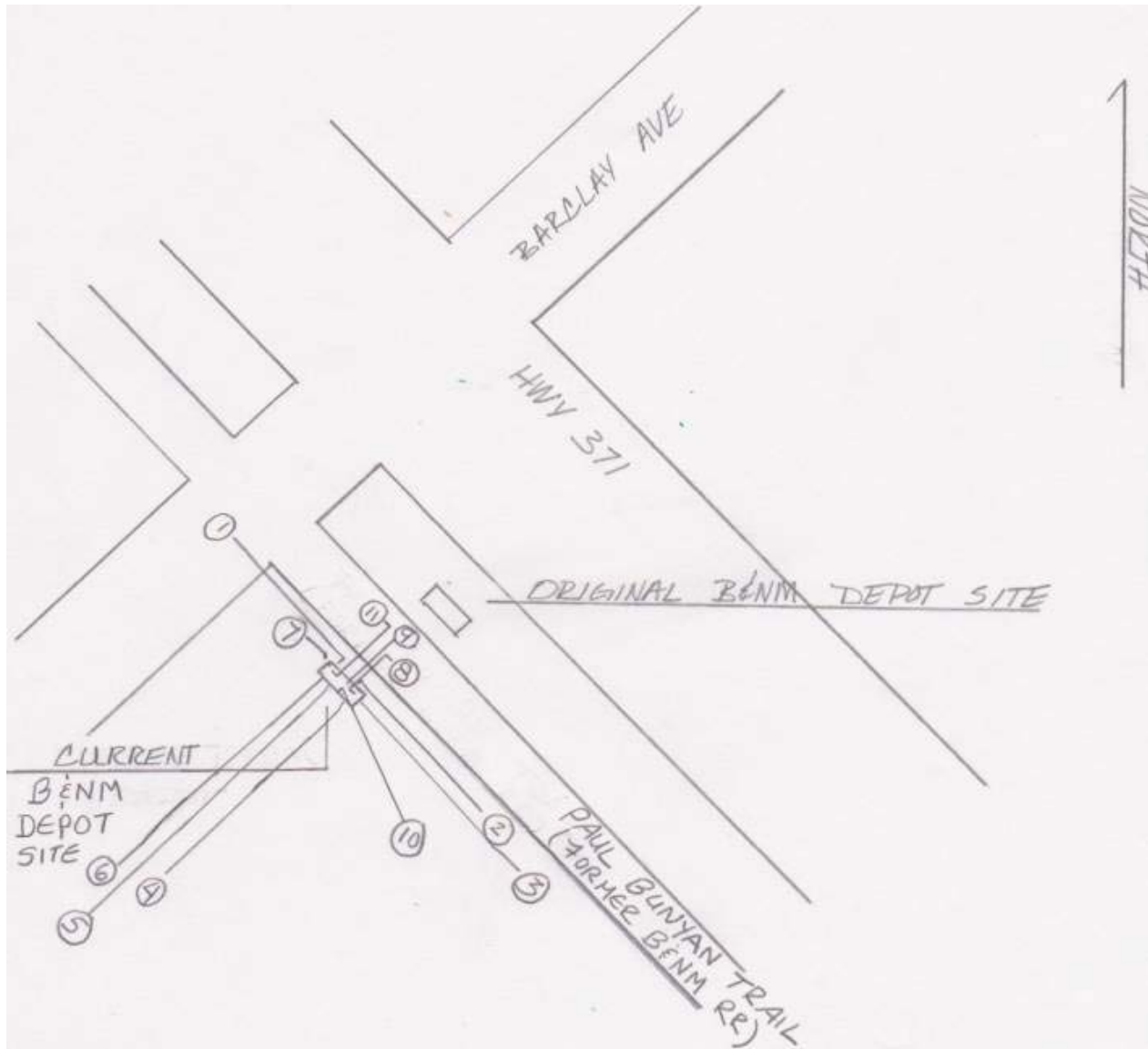
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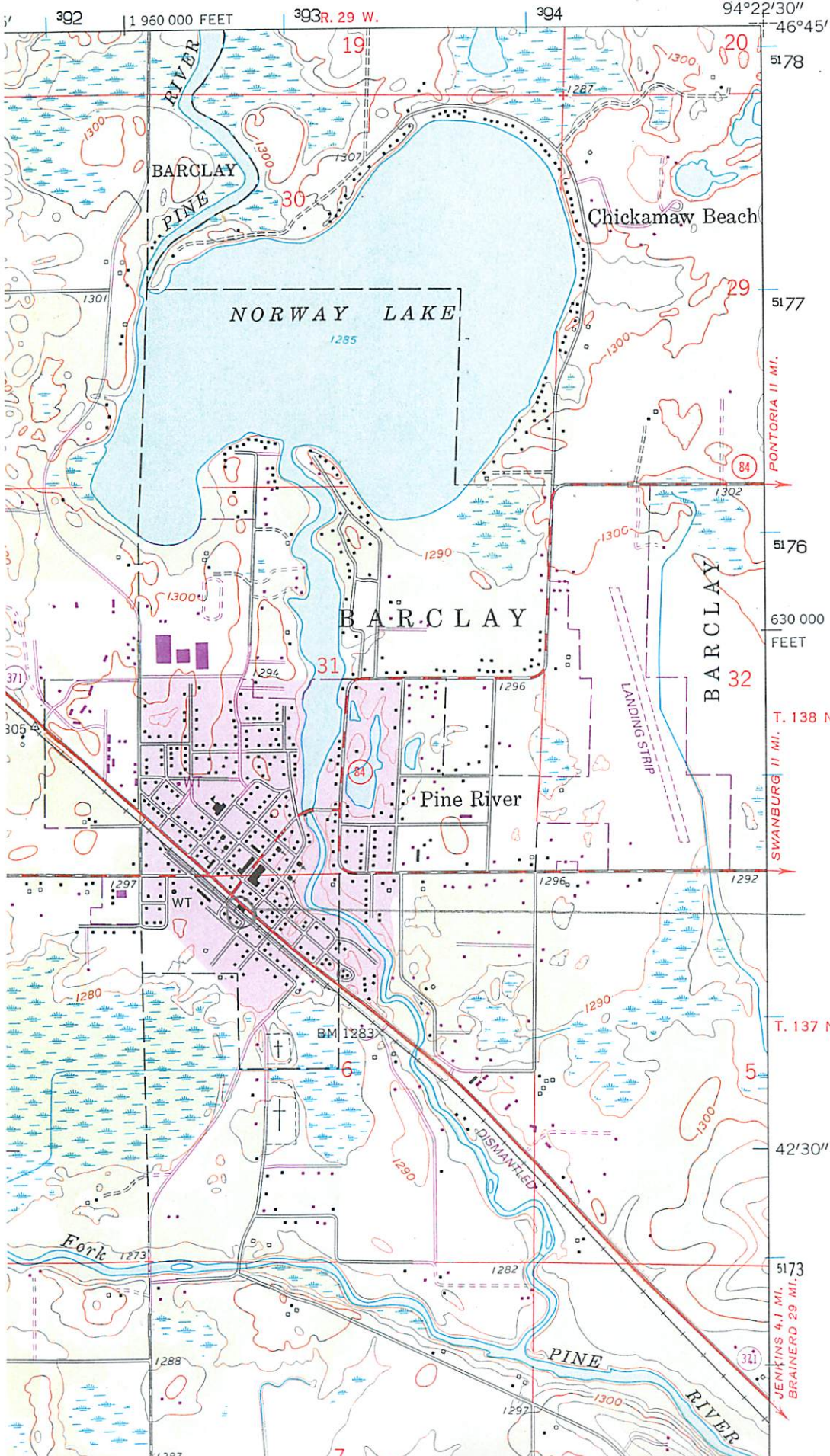
Brainerd and Northern Minnesota/Minnesota and International Railway Depot
----- Name of Property
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Photograph Key



PINE RIVER QUADRANGLE
 MINNESOTA - CASS CO.
 7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

7177 IV SE
 (LAKE ADA)



BRainerd AND
 Northern MINNESOTA
 RAILWAY DEPOT,
 PINE RIVER, CASS CO.,
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