

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 *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Blue Sulphur Springs Pavilion

other names/site number N/A

**2. Location**

street & number CR 25, 9 mi. N of Alderson ☐ not for publication

city or town Blue Sulphur Springs ☐ vicinity

state West Virginia code WV county Greenbrier code WV025 zip code 24910

**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 ☐ nationally ☒ statewide ☐ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\* William G. Sanner  
Signature of certifying official/Title

9/23/92  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that the property is:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

☐ entered in the National Register.  
☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined eligible for the  
National Register  
☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined not eligible for the  
National Register.

☐ removed from the National  
Register.

☐ other, (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Blue Sulphur Springs Pavilion  
Name of Property

Greenbrier, WV  
County and State

## 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.

### 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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Entertainment/Recreation

Health/Medicine

Social History

### Period of Significance

c. 1834 - 1861

### Significant Dates

N/A

### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

### Architect/Builder

George Washington Buster/Builder

### Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

### Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

### Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey  
# \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering  
Record # \_\_\_\_\_

### Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Blue Sulphur Springs Pavilion  
Name of Property

Greenbrier, WV  
County and State

### 5. Classification

#### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private  
☐ public-local  
☐ public-State  
☐ 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

\_\_\_\_\_ buildings

\_\_\_\_\_ sites

\_\_\_\_\_ 1 \_\_\_\_\_ structures

\_\_\_\_\_ objects

\_\_\_\_\_ 1 \_\_\_\_\_ Total

#### Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

#### Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

### 6. Function or Use

#### Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Health care: Resort

#### Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Vacant/ not in use

### 7. Description

#### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Greek Revival

#### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick, stone

walls N/A

roof Asphalt

other Wood

Plaster

#### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Blue Sulphur Springs Pavilion  
Name of Property

Greenbrier, WV  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approximately 30 acres

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	17	531120	4186080
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2	17	531800	4186500

3	17	531580	4186710
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4	17	531620	4186800

☐ See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Amanda S. Cox

organization \_\_\_\_\_ date July 31, 1992

street & number 2 Roller Road telephone (304) 344-3372

city or town Charleston state W. Va. zip code 25314

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### 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.

#### Photographs

\_\_\_\_\_ Representative black and white photographs of the property.

#### Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

### Property Owner

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

name Rebecca Lineberry

street & number P.O. Box 557 telephone (304) 445-7382

city or town Alderson state W. Va. zip code 24910

**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. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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### 7. DESCRIPTION

The Blue Sulphur Springs Pavilion is a monumental Greek Revival structure. The Pavilion protects the sulphur spring for which the Blue Sulphur Springs resort hotel was famous and is located in a pastoral setting approximately nine miles north of the community of Alderson, West Virginia. The Pavilion is all that remains of the once-fashionable resort.

The one story structure is entirely open with a commanding view of the surrounding valley. The Pavilion has a square floor plan, each side measuring approximately 32 feet and 10 inches long, with the spring basin in the center. The basin into which the spring flows is marble with a stone rim surrounding it. The sulphur spring has a continuous flow of 6 gallons a minute and the temperature is a constant 58 degrees Fahrenheit.

The exterior decoration of the structure is the same on all four sides. The foundation is brick faced with stone. The facades exhibit a total of twelve columns of a modified Roman Doric order with squared plinths and smooth shafts, but lacking the molded base common to this order. The columns are brick covered with plaster and support a full entablature. The frieze is clapboard, unadorned with decorative embellishments. The cornices are plain and flat. The four-sided roof is hipped with centered, clapboard pediments projecting from each hip. The simplicity of the detailing of this structure is appropriate to its use as a shelter or spring house for the treasured sulphur spring.

Blue Sulphur Springs is located in a wide valley formed by the junction of the Kitchen Creek and Sawmill Hollow valleys and within the geographic area of the sulphuretted and thermal mineral fountains of the mountains of Virginia and West Virginia. It is one of a series of mineral springs in the area, which includes Pence, Red Sulphur, Salt Sulphur and Sweet Springs (all in Monroe County) and, most famous among them, White Sulphur Springs, home of the Greenbrier, in Greenbrier County.

In the early days of its existence, the view from the Pavilion or springhouse may have been quite different. William Burke, who visited the springs of the area in the 1840s and wrote Mineral Springs of Virginia in 1846, called the Pavilion a "Temple" and described the resort thusly:

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## (DESCRIPTION CONT'D)

We said that this valley is beautiful; we should, perhaps, have said, it has been. Fuit Illium. Never have we seen bad taste more unfortunately illustrated than here. It seems as if the designer had his brain obfuscated by mint-julep. What man in his sober senses could have ever thought of spoiling a lovely valley like this, admitting a prospect of several miles, by throwing across it from hill to hill a long line of buildings which could have been so easily and so gracefully ranged along the sides; not only obstructing the view, but also preventing the delightful current of air which otherwise would have fanned it in the dogdays. Not content with this piece of botching, they must permit Dr. Martin to erect his tartanean ovens also across the valley, leaving the Temple containing the Spring, and the lawn in which it stands, bounded by brick walls and mountains.

Contrary to Burke's less-than-complimentary description, an early drawing from Beyer's Album of Virginia (1857) shows a triple-rail fence surrounding the resort grounds rather than a brick wall. More importantly, Burke's description mentions the Pavilion and spring, indicating its prominence in the resort complex, which would not have existed but for the spring.

As an example of monumental Greek Revival architecture, the Blue Sulphur Springs Pavilion is unique to the rural landscape of West Virginia. Of the many resort pavilions or spring houses throughout the state, no other exhibits this architectural style. The Pavilion has been preserved and much photographed and appears in Stan Cohen's Springs of the Virginias - A Pictorial History (1981). The spring still flows, and though it is not used for commercial purposes, local residents and tourists drink the water for its reputed curative powers. The Pavilion's rare style, coupled with its location in this pastoral setting, makes it an historic view shed and a key element in the architectural history of the region and of the state.

## 8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Blue Sulphur Springs Pavilion is historically significant for its association with events which occurred from 1834-1861. The Pavilion served as the focal point of, and an impor-

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## (STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE CONT'D)

tant gathering place for, social and recreational activities, and attracted many people in pursuit of the healthful benefits of the spring's water. It stands as the only example of Greek Revival architecture for a pavilion or springhouse in the State of West Virginia. The Greek Revival style was a fashionable architectural style of the time, though less commonly found in West Virginia and rare in rural areas. The style was fittingly chosen for the Pavilion to protect the wondrous sulphur spring and the visitors who flocked to it.

The structure survived the destruction during the Civil War of the resort which had been built around it, and is used today by local residents and tourists much as it was in the early days of its existence.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The origin of the Blue Sulphur Springs Pavilion or springhouse dates from 1834, prior to West Virginia statehood. In that year, the Blue Sulphur Springs company was chartered by the General Assembly of Virginia. George Washington Buster became the sole owner of the company and built a resort complex around the spring. The resort was named Blue Sulphur for the iridescent color of the sulphur spring. The resort complex included a three-story brick hotel with room for 200 guests, the Pavilion, a bathhouse, twenty frame cottages, servants' quarters and stables.

In its heyday in the 1840s, prominent guests from throughout the United States, England, France and Belgium visited the resort to imbibe the water from the spring. Among them, as evidenced by the original hotel register, were Robert E. Lee, Andrew Jackson, Martin Van Buren, Henry Clay and Jerome Bonaparte, brother of Napoleon I.

Long before the site at Blue Sulphur was developed as a resort, the sulphur water from the spring was reported to have curative powers. It was thought to be a remedy for many diseases, including those of the liver and skin, kidney irritations, bladder and prostate ailments, cholera, typhoid fever, diphtheria, dysentery and diarrhea. In fact, the hotel engaged a Dr. Alexis Martin as its resident physician. Near the Pavilion or springhouse, Dr. Martin built "tartarean ovens", a special bathhouse where hot mineral water and vapor baths were administered.

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(HISTORICAL BACKGROUND CONT'D)

Martin also instituted the first mud baths in the United States at Blue Sulphur.

Blue Sulphur Spring's historical importance as a source of recreation and entertainment cannot be overstated. It served as a place for travellers from far and near to relax and escape the pressures of daily life. "Taking the waters", as it was commonly described, was part of the treatment to promote health and the sulphur water was generally viewed as an elixir which would cure various ills. These activities benefitted the welfare of society, attracting many people including some of the great historical figures of the era. The Pavilion was the heart of the resort, and has stood alone since 1864 on rural pasture land. Today, the monumental Greek Revival structure is reasonably well-preserved. The Pavilion dominates every view of the valley in which it stands, and continues to protect the Blue Sulphur spring.

In the late 1850s the resort began to decline for reasons which included competition with neighboring resorts (principally the resort at White Sulphur, now the Greenbrier), economic stagnation in the country and the impending threat of war. In 1859 the resort closed and the properties were sold to the Baptists of Virginia who wanted to establish a school to educate ministers. The school opened on October 1, 1859, first as Allegheny High School, later renamed Allegheny College. In September of 1860 a fire swept through the main hotel which was used as a dormitory and burned it to the ground. Part of the hotel was rebuilt later that same year, in anticipation of a larger enrollment in the fall of 1861, but the Civil War caused it to close before the end of 1861.

During the war, Greenbrier County saw bitter engagements between Union and Confederate forces. The hotel was used alternately by both armies as a bivouac and hospital. In 1864, Union troops burned all of the buildings at the resort to prevent the Confederates from using them as an outpost. Only the Pavilion was spared.

The property surrounding the Pavilion remained unattended until 1878, when George Washington Buster's heir regained title to it. The Buster family owned the property until early in 1964, when it was conveyed by Bernard Buster to Lewis Fleshman. In June of 1964, Fleshman conveyed the property to the current owner, Rebecca Lineberry.



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## (HISTORICAL BACKGROUND CONT'D)

This illustrious, albeit tumultuous, history of Blue Sulphur Springs and the fact that the Pavilion remains standing is a tribute to its builder - George Washington Buster. This lone example of Greek Revival architecture sets the Pavilion apart from the many other springhouses erected from the 1830s through the 1860s in the Virginias.

The Pavilion as it presently stands appears much as it did at the date of construction. The site surrounding the structure is quite damp, causing the twelve original columns supporting the structure to retain moisture. The columns have been patched where cracks and peeling appeared in the plaster. The foundation, which is brick faced with stone, has a number of missing bricks. These sections of the structure are in need of restoration to prevent further deterioration. Based upon photographic evidence and oral histories, modifications appear to have been made to the pediments and roofline sometime after 1930, reducing the size of the pediments which originally spanned each side. New shingles were put on the roof in 1966. Today, the Pavilion stands as the focal point in this rural valley, its Greek Revival grandeur essentially intact despite the events which swirled around it, monumental in proportion and set apart from all other buildings and structures within sight.

## 9. BIBLIOGRAPHY - PRINCIPAL REFERENCES

1. Cohen, Stan. Historic Springs of the Virginias: A Pictorial History. Charleston: Pictorial Histories Publishing Company, revised edition 1991.
2. Donnelly, Shirley. "Blue Sulphur Springs Resort Burned in 1864". Beckley Register and Post Herald. October 13, 1962.
3. Donnelly, Shirley. "Old Blue Sulphur". Beckley Post-Herald. August, 1978.
4. Greenbrier County Historical Society Journal. Volume III, November, 1974.
5. Lineberry, Rebecca. Interviews, July and August, 1992.
6. "Medicinal Waters". The West Virginia Review, July, 1933.
7. Pauley, Michael J. "Springs and Spas of Southeastern West Virginia". July, 1985. (SHPO)
8. Rice, Otis K. A History of Greenbrier County. Parsons, W. Va.: McClain Printing Co., 1986.
9. "Taking the Waters". Archeological Investigations. University of Kentucky, March, 1988.

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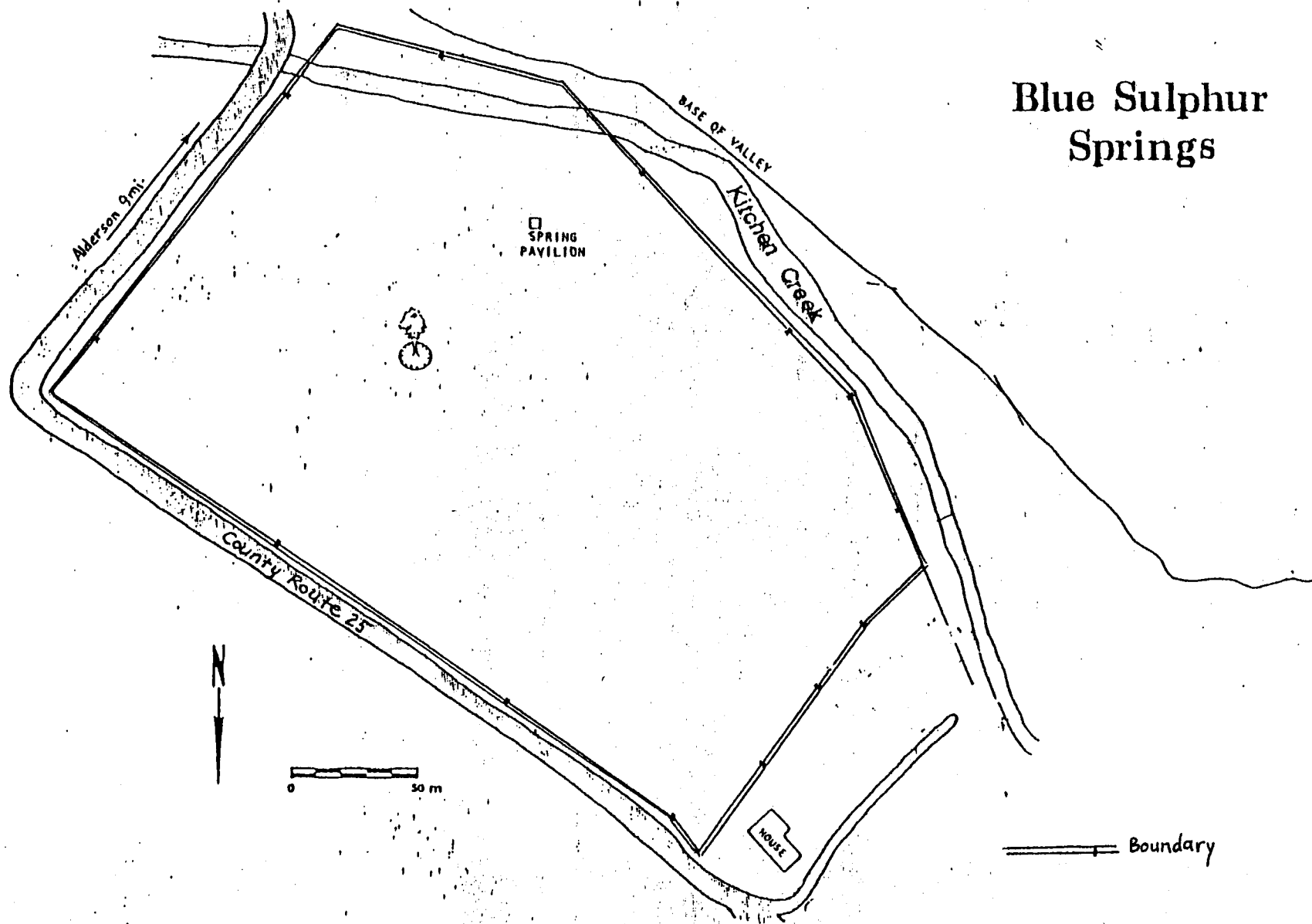
### 10. VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

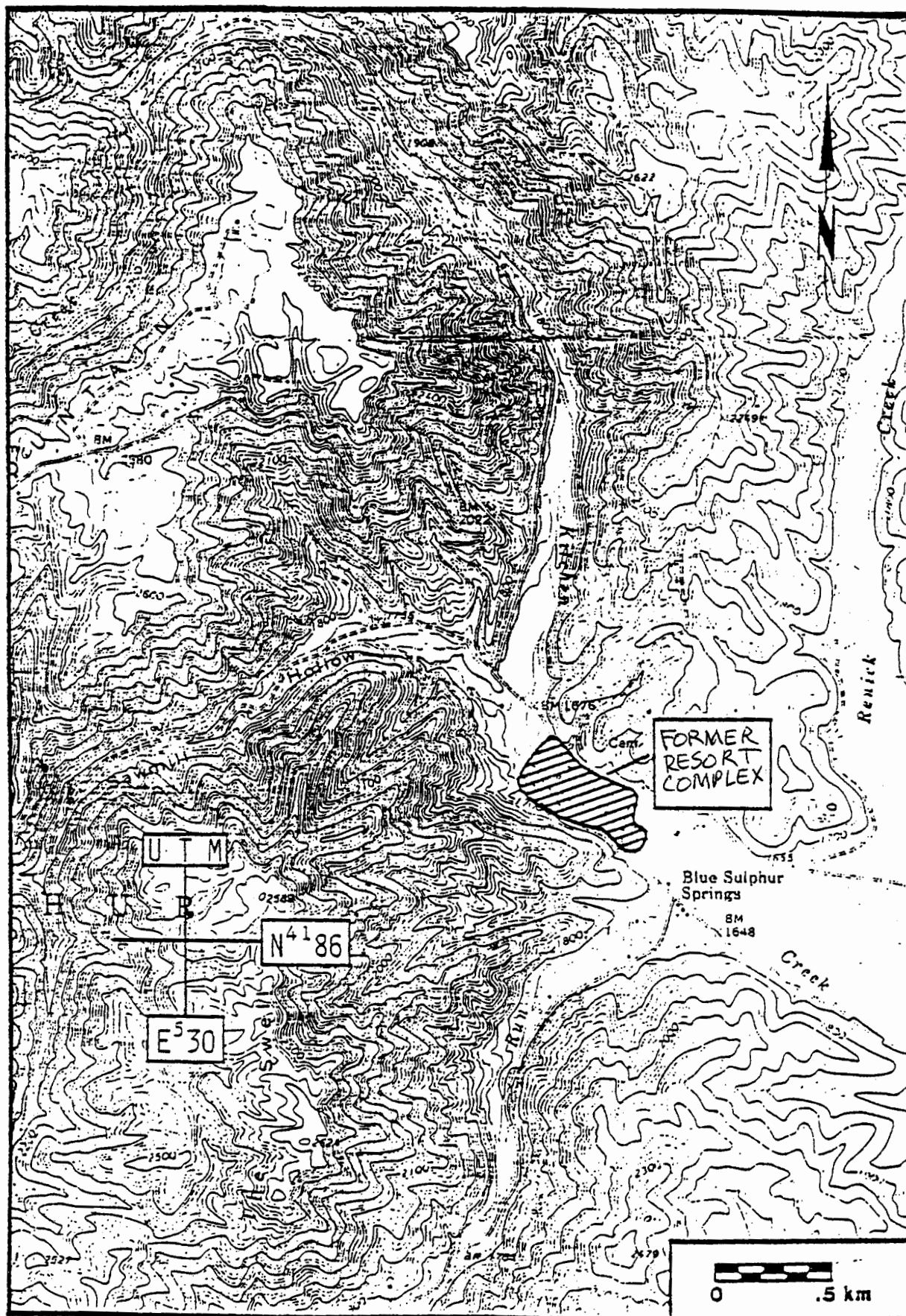
See attached maps. The nominated property includes the parcel historically associated with the Blue Sulphur Springs Resort complex.

### BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

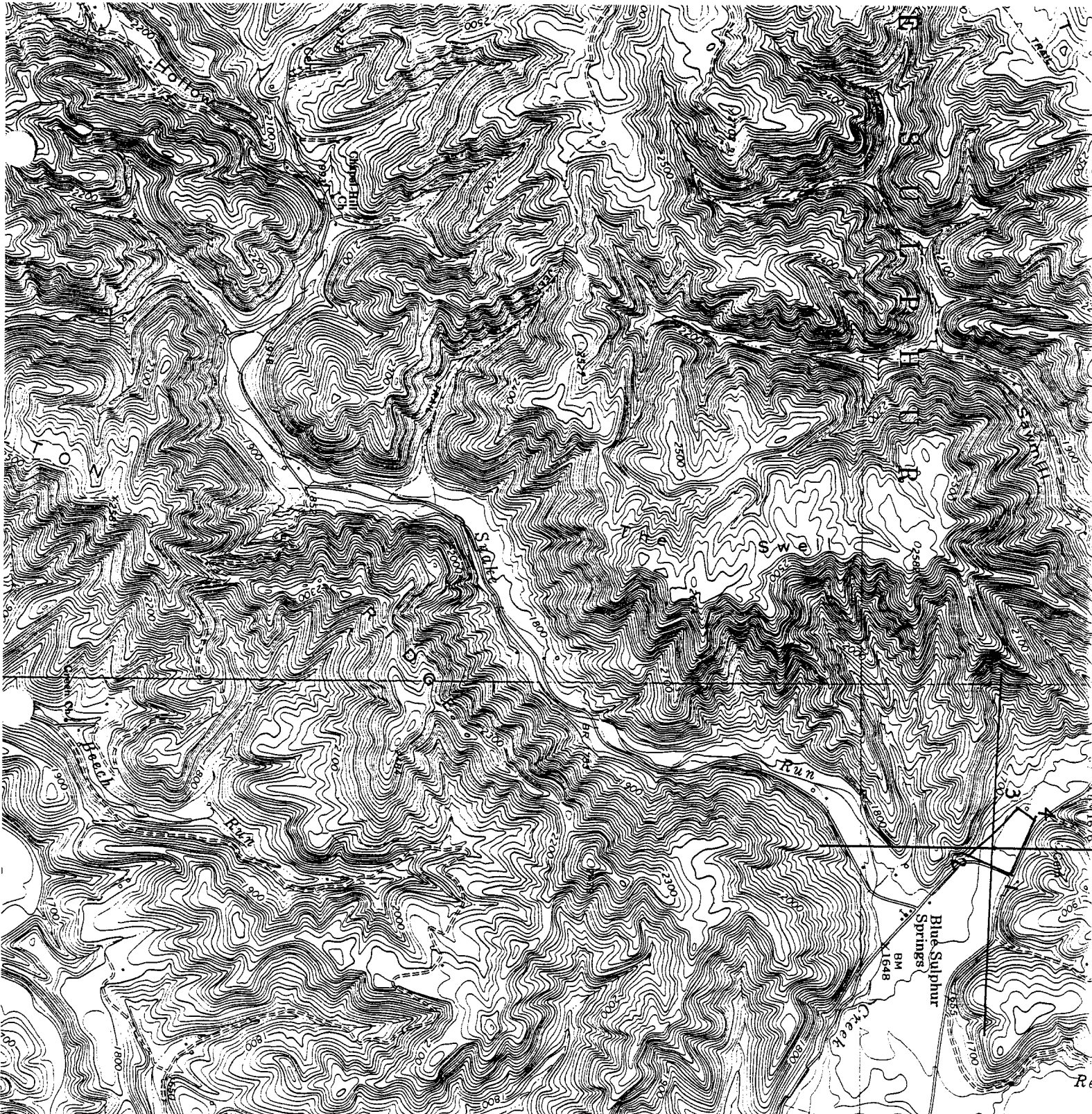
The Pavilion dominates the valley in which it is located. The structure has stood alone since 1864 as the focal point of this historic viewshed. The specific 30 acre tract on which it stands is a field, bounded by County Route 25, Kitchen Creek and the hills which rise above the road and the creek. These physical boundaries, which dramatically frame and set off the Pavilion today, are also the boundaries of the former Blue Sulphur Springs resort complex.

# Blue Sulphur Springs





The Blue Sulphur Springs Site, Greenbrier County, West Virginia.



BLUE SULPHUR  
SPRINGS PAVILION

C.R. 25

BLUE SULPHUR  
SPRINGS,

W.V.  
1866 FLETCHER CO.,

UTM:

- 1. 17/531120/4186680
- 2. 17/531800/4186500
- 3. 17/531580/4186710
- 4. 17/531620/4186800

(ASBURY)  
4859 SE

47°30"

4183

4184

4187



