

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

| |
|------------------|
| STATE: |
| West Virginia |
| COUNTY: |
| Pocahontas |
| FOR NPS USE ONLY |
| ENTRY DATE |

| | |
|--|--|
| 1. NAME | |
| COMMON: | |
| Cass Scenic Railroad | |
| AND/OR HISTORIC: | |
| Cass Logging Railroad, West Virginia Pulp and Paper Company Railroad | |

| | | | |
|--|------|-------------------------|------|
| 2. LOCATION | | | |
| STREET AND NUMBER: | | | |
| Along old lumbering railroad tracks from Cass to Bald Knob | | | |
| CITY OR TOWN: | | CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: | |
| Cass | | Second | |
| STATE | CODE | COUNTY: | CODE |
| West Virginia | 54 | Pocahontas | 075 |

| | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| 3. CLASSIFICATION | | | |
| CATEGORY (Check One) | OWNERSHIP | STATUS | ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both | Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Being Considered | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress |
| PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate) | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment | <input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scientific | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____ _____ | | | |

| | |
|------------------------------|---------------|
| 4. OWNER OF PROPERTY | |
| OWNER'S NAME: | |
| State of West Virginia | |
| STREET AND NUMBER: | |
| 1800 Washington Street, East | |
| CITY OR TOWN: | STATE: |
| Charleston | West Virginia |
| | CODE |
| | 54 |

| | |
|---|---------------|
| 5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION | |
| COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: | |
| Pocahontas County Courthouse | |
| STREET AND NUMBER: | |
| Court Street | |
| CITY OR TOWN: | STATE: |
| Marlinton | West Virginia |
| | CODE |
| | 54 |

| | |
|--|--------|
| 6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS | |
| TITLE OF SURVEY: | |
| DATE OF SURVEY: | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local | |
| DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: | |
| STREET AND NUMBER: | |
| CITY OR TOWN: | STATE: |
| | CODE |

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

| | | | | |
|--------|---------------|---------|------------|------------------|
| STATE: | West Virginia | COUNTY: | Pocahontas | FOR NPS USE ONLY |
| | | | | |

7. DESCRIPTION

| | | | | | | |
|-----------|---|--|--------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| CONDITION | (Check One) | | | | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good | <input type="checkbox"/> Fair | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated | <input type="checkbox"/> Ruins | <input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed |
| | (Check One) | | | (Check One) | | |
| | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered | <input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered | <input type="checkbox"/> Moved | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site | | |

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

About the beginning of the twentieth century the lumbering industry developed on a large scale in mountainous eastern West Virginia south of its Eastern Panhandle. The coming of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway to the hills of the present Cass area offered prospects of boom in a locale noted for rugged terrain and sparse population. Today the timber business is not the same in Cass, but the State of West Virginia has helped preserve a sense of the excitement of climbing to high vistas and transporting the raw product on steep inclines, for its Cass Scenic Railroad now carries on a tradition in the Monongahela National Forest. Only slight alterations to engines and improvement of track mark changes from the past.

THE RAILROAD LINE

The Cass Scenic Railroad is of standard gauge track and extends from the old Chesapeake and Ohio Railway depot in the hamlet of Cass, at 2452 feet elevation, to the summit of Bald Knob, at 4842 feet, a distance of nearly twelve rail miles over rough and winding terrain. Grades average between 4% and 5%, reaching 11% in some places with a ruling grade of 12% over a stretch of S-curve trackage. The area is so rugged and the climb so steep in one section that two switchbacks--zigzag arrangements which allow changing direction and curvature for easier mounting of a steep grade--were included to help ease the burden on the long mountain. In some segments the line makes 180° turns and passes in and out along changing contours. A perspective of this may be better had if one realizes that the straight-line distance from Cass to Bald Knob is only about four miles, but the train must travel nearly twelve miles to complete the trip.

THE WATER TOWER

Line engines must rely on steam to power them to the summit, so this means there is a constant need for fuel and water. The latter element is supplied from a water tower formerly used by the Chesapeake and Ohio. This tank was constructed about 1900 and is located in the vicinity of the machine shop and an old planing mill on the level area near the depot. Supported by a high steel superstructure, the wooden tower is girded by heavy steel cables and capped with a gently sloping octagonal roof.

THE SHAY ENGINES

The Cass Scenic Railroad now maintains at least six Shay-type engines, an invention of Ephraim Shay used to conquer mountainous areas and serving Cass since about 1902. The Shay generally has a conventional looking horizontal boiler, but it is mounted in a most unconventional lopsided position on a flatcar-like frame. Vertical cylinders balance the boiler and are connected to trucks--rather than driving wheels--with shafts, extension joints, universal joints and bevel gears. This contraption is deceptive, for it looks as though it can move only with lack of grace and maneuverability. Although essentially slow moving, a Shay does it with a maximum of action, its three cylinders and crossheads with pistons churning on an exposed crankshaft and universals and extension joints whirling furiously at lazily rotating wheels. The gearing system makes it possible for every wheel on the engine and accompanying tender to act similar to a drive wheel. All wheels are interconnected in the trucks, so no wheel can turn independently. This allows tremendous traction which, when combined with a power-producing gear ratio, makes a very sturdy and useful work engine.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- ☐ Pre-Columbian; ☐ 16th Century ☐ 18th Century ☒ 20th Century
☐ 15th Century ☐ 17th Century ☒ 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi- | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Industry | losophy | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Art | Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human- | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | itarian | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Aside from being a major tourist attraction in West Virginia, the district surrounding Cass Scenic Railroad is one of the few areas in the United States where one can see an operation that captures so much of the flavor of the logging industry and its commercial influence as it was practiced over fifty years ago.

At one time red spruce, yellow birch and hard maple were abundant on the mountains around Cass. Unfortunately, no nearby streams were large enough for log driving, and the valuable timber went uncut. Just prior to 1900, Samuel E. Slaymaker, one of the first lumbermen in the area, learned that the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway planned to run a line up the Greenbrier River from the Lewisburg area, passing the present location of Cass. He conceived of building a secondary spur from Cass to the timber fields and in 1900 moved toward fruition of plans by opening a logging camp near Leatherbark Creek just northeast of the town. Soon thereafter he began construction of the railroad across the Cheat Mountain area. This line, known as the Greenbrier, Cheat and Elk, was later extended northward to Cheat Junction, Randolph County, where it connected with the Western Maryland, and westward to Bergoo, near Webster Springs in Webster County. At the peak of operations over eighty-five miles of track were in use.

In 1902 the town was incorporated and named for Joseph K. Cass, Chairman of the Board of the West Virginia Pulp and Paper Company of New York. In the same year the West Virginia Spruce Lumber Company completed a large double-band mill at the mouth of Leatherbark Creek.

Like most lumber towns of the period, Cass exhibited a phenomenal growth rate. Between 1908 and 1920, the population was nearly 2000; the town contained a huge company store, two hotels, several restaurants, saloons and entertainment houses, two schools, three churches and over four hundred company-owned dwellings. Around 1910 the mill and holdings were transferred to the West Virginia Pulp and Paper Company. The building was destroyed by fire in 1922, but the flourishing state of business warranted quick rebuilding. It was sold again in 1942 to the Mower Lumber Company which ran it until July 1, 1960, when operations ceased.

It is small wonder that the economy of the entire area began to wane as timber became scarce and work was cut back. Many were laid off; others left for fear of unemployment. When the mill finally closed in 1960, the population of Cass had declined to 327. After operations stopped, the railroad equipment was sold for junk, and several miles of track were taken up.

In 1961 Mr. Russell Baum of Sunbury, Pennsylvania, appeared before the West Virginia Legislature with an impassioned plea to save the remaining tracks and three remaining engines for a tourist attraction. The cry

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

corrected copy

| | |
|------------------------|------|
| STATE West Virginia | |
| COUNTY Pocahontas | |
| FOR NPS USE ONLY | |
| ENTRY NUMBER | DATE |
| | |

(Number all entries)

7. DESCRIPTION (Continued)

Each engine is painted black and trimmed in gold. Air brakes are standard, and the smoke stacks are crowned in a manner which cuts down the danger of spitting embers. Several operating Shays were originally used in the area, but others have been brought from as far away as the Pacific coast. Size varies from around forty tons to well over one hundred tons, and oil and coal burners operate together. All were made from about 1902 to 1925. These engines are maintained and refurbished on the site, and they are joined in service by a few lesser-known types of rugged engines like the Heisler and Climax. All trackage is to be included in the nomination and approximately thirty feet on each side of the center of the track.

8. SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)

was immediately taken up by many citizens and newspapers of West Virginia. The legislature responded with an appropriation of \$150,000 for the purchase and improvement of the railroad, shop and about seven miles of track. Today, the line extends from Cass to Bald Knob, a distance of twelve miles, and at least eight engines serve the growing tourist industry.

The equipment was renovated during the winter of 1962-63. On June 15, 1963, the line was officially named the Cass Scenic Railroad and was opened to tourist travel. Interest in the run up the mountain and down was great from the beginning, and the first season (73 day) drew 22,956 paying customers. Over 70,000 rode the rails to the summit in 1970.

Cass Scenic Railroad revives a past in the rugged mountains of eastern West Virginia where the lumbering interests thrived and spurred a commerce which made the Cass vicinity a boom area. It uses the same route of old and depends on the heavy-duty engines made famous in such logging operations over fifty years ago.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES (Continued)

Koch, Michael. The Shay Locomotive: Titan of the Timber. New York: World Press, 1971. (pp. 116-18, 124, 134)

Neighbors, Kyle, comp. and ed. The Lima Shays on the Greenbrier, Cheat & Elk Railroad Company. Parsons, W.Va.: McClain Printing Co., 1969.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
PROPERTY MAP FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

| | |
|------------------------|------|
| STATE West Virginia | |
| COUNTY Pocahontas | |
| FOR NPS USE ONLY | |
| ENTRY NUMBER | DATE |
| | |

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

| | | | |
|---|------|------------|------|
| 1. NAME | | | |
| COMMON: Cass Scenic Railroad | | | |
| AND/OR HISTORIC: Cass Logging Railroad, West Virginia Pulp & Paper Co. Railroad | | | |
| 2. LOCATION | | | |
| STREET AND NUMBER: | | | |
| Along old lumbering railroad tracks from Cass to Bald Knob | | | |
| CITY OR TOWN: | | | |
| Cass | | | |
| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY: | CODE |
| West Virginia | 54 | Pocahontas | 075 |
| 3. MAP REFERENCE | | | |
| SOURCE: | | | |
| U.S. Geological Survey, Cass, W.Va.-Va., 15' Quadrangle | | | |
| SCALE: 1: 62500 | | | |
| DATE: 1922 | | | |
| 4. REQUIREMENTS | | | |
| TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS | | | |
| 1. Property boundaries where required. | | | |
| 2. North arrow. | | | |
| 3. Latitude and longitude reference. | | | |

Dotted lines mark approximate boundaries. About 12 feet on either side of the railroad tracks, except in the depot and shop areas, where about 50 feet is reserved on the side of their location.

- #1--Shop and water tower area.
- #2--Switchbacks.
- #3--Bald Knob summit.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Blackhurst, W.E. Your Train Ride through History. Parsons, W.VA.: McClain Printing Co., 1968.

Boyd, Jim. "Cass: Geared Loco Haven." Railroad Model Craftsman, August 1972, 38-45.

Clarkson, Roy B. and Kenneth L. Carvell. "West Virginia's Logging Railroad-- Its Past and Present." Northeastern Logger, X (Dec. 1961), 20-21, 62-63.

Harr, Milt. "Bald Knob Bound on the Cass Scenic Railroad." Travel West Virginia, III (Summer 1964), 12-13.

Killoran, John P. "Saved: Switchbacks and Shays." Trains, XXIV (Jan. 1964), 38-43.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

| LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY | | | OR | LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES | | |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|----|---|-------------------------|--|
| CORNER | LATITUDE | LONGITUDE | | LATITUDE | LONGITUDE | |
| | Degrees Minutes Seconds | Degrees Minutes Seconds | | Degrees Minutes Seconds | Degrees Minutes Seconds | |
| NW | 38 ° 28 ' 07 " | 79 ° 57 ' 46 " | | ° ' " | ° ' " | |
| NE | 38 ° 28 ' 07 " | 79 ° 54 ' 41 " | | | | |
| SE | 38 ° 23 ' 49 " | 79 ° 54 ' 41 " | | | | |
| SW | 38 ° 23 ' 49 " | 79 ° 57 ' 46 " | | | | |

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 45 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |
|--------|------|---------|------|
| | | | |
| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY: | CODE |
| | | | |
| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY: | CODE |
| | | | |
| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY: | CODE |
| | | | |

11. FORM PREPARED BY

| | | |
|---|---------------|------|
| NAME AND TITLE: | | |
| James E. Harding, Research Analyst and Ted McGee, Field Agent | | |
| ORGANIZATION | DATE | |
| West Virginia Antiquities Commission | May 13, 1974 | |
| STREET AND NUMBER: | | |
| Old Mountainlair, West Virginia University | | |
| CITY OR TOWN: | STATE | CODE |
| Morgantown | West Virginia | 54 |

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ☐ State ☒ Local ☐

Name

Leonard M. Davis

Title State Historic Preservation Officer

Date May 13, 1974

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

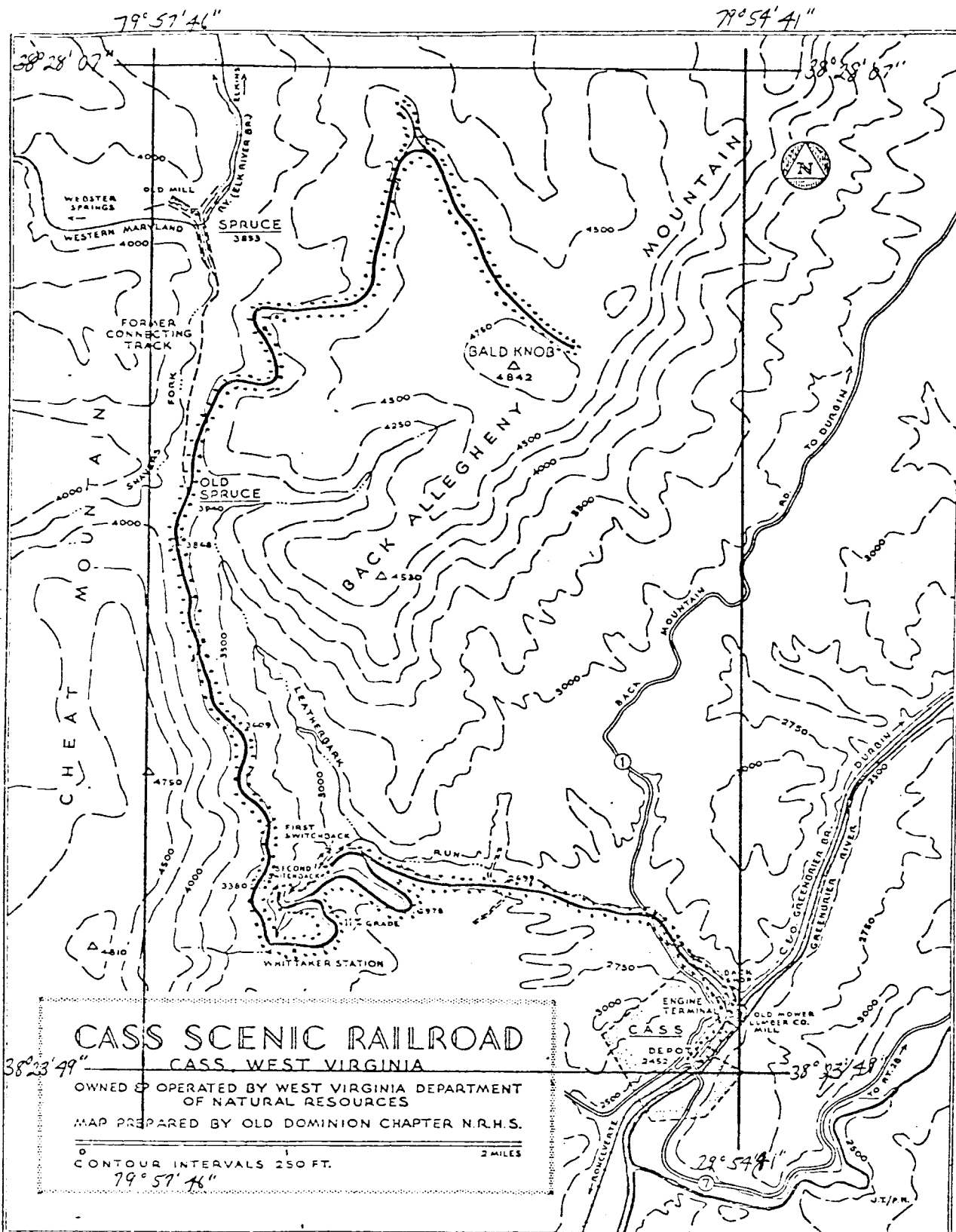
Date

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



Old Dominion Chapter,
National Railway Historical Society

STATE OF
REPRESENTATIVE
GEOLOGICAL AND MINERAL

