

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

DRAFT

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 The Moorings

other names/site number Wintergreen

name of related multiple property listing N/A

Location

street & number 365 Big Wolf Road East

NA
NA

not for publication

city or town Tupper Lake

vicinity

state New York code 36 county Franklin code 33 zip code 12986

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 national statewide x local

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 _____

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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	
4	1	buildings
		sites
	1	structures
		objects
4	2	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

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/Camp

DOMESTIC/Secondary Structure

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/Camp

DOMESTIC/Secondary Structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY
AMERICAN MOVEMENTS: Craftsman

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: WOOD; CONCRETE; STONE

walls: WOOD – Shingle, Weatherboard

roof: ASPHALT

other:

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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

The Moorings, also known as Wintergreen, is an architecturally significant residential retreat located on approximately ten acres of land on the eastern shore of Big Wolf Lake in the Town of Tupper Lake, Franklin County, New York. It is eligible under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as a later work of noted Adirondack architect William G. Distin. The Moorings is one of about thirty wooded properties spread sparsely along the shoreline and is one of five seasonal retreats, or Adirondack “camps” designed by Distin on Big Wolf Lake. The property sits three miles north of the commercial center of Tupper Lake, a village known as Altamont prior to 2004. This region is characterized as the most centralized part of the Adirondacks, a mountain range largely made up of the six-million-acre Adirondack Park.¹ The Park is the largest in the contiguous United States and marks one of the earliest successful conservation efforts in the country. Within the Adirondacks the Moorings is situated in a rural wooded setting comprised largely of mature coniferous trees, shrubbery, but no formal landscaping. The property includes four contributing camp or cottage-style buildings, a non-contributing woodshed, and a non-contributing children’s playhouse. All structures are clustered near the lake in the southwest quadrant of the parcel. Three of the contributing buildings—the Lake House, Beach House and Carriage House—were constructed in 1918. The fourth, Wintergreen, was designed by one of the Adirondack region's most prominent architects, William Distin, in 1965. All contributing buildings retain particularly strong integrity of design, materials, and workmanship, expressing how rustic Adirondack architecture shifted in the twentieth century. The 1965 Distin home with its polished cedar interior and restrained centralized functions is a departure from the 1918 house that displays untreated wood and a sprawling complex of buildings. Additionally, the property retains its sense of place with little to no disturbance to the setting and location, but it illustrates how rustic romantic ideals of nineteenth and early twentieth-century Adirondack camps eventually gave way to more sophisticated and polished notions of the aesthetic. As such, the property is eligible under Criterion C for illustrating this evolving Adirondack architectural idiom.

Detailed Description

The Moorings consists of four contributing buildings, one non-contributing building, and one non-contributing structure. The three contributing 1918 buildings—Lake House, Beach House and Carriage House—all have similar exterior features that reflect rustic natural aesthetics that were well established in the Adirondacks by the twentieth century. Most notably this includes the use of natural materials such as cedar wood cladding, roughly hewn posts and brackets, and coursed rubble stone. But unlike most other extant camps in the region, the Moorings exhibits the continuation of Adirondack camp architecture into the second half of the twentieth century with the addition of William Distin’s 1965 “Wintergreen” residence on the property. Distin was a protégé of William L. Coulter, who is the earliest and best-known architect of great camps and cure cottages in the region. Like his mentor, Distin made a prestigious career designing great camps, but also was known for

¹ “Adirondack Park and the Catskills,” New York State Archives, accessed May. 15, 2025, https://www.archives.nysed.gov/research/environment/research/park_overview.shtml

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several churches, hotels, medical buildings, and the 1932 Lake Placid Olympics ice arena. He designed five residences on Big Wolf Lake, including the Moorings, in the last five years of his life.²

Following are detailed descriptions of property resources:

The Lake House (1918) – One Contributing Building

Exterior

For many years known as the Summer House, the Lake House (photos 2 through 6) sits about fifty feet back from the shoreline. It is one-and-a-half story H-shaped Craftsman structure with a cross-gable asphalt roof with rafter tails under the eaves. The frame structure is clad in board and batten siding and includes 1200 square feet of open porches. The foundation consists of vertical log posts, and the open-air space below the building is disguised by ground-level latticework painted green and white. The lake-facing western façade (photo 2) is elevated from the ground and includes a full-width, recessed porch (photo 3) extending the entire length of the façade and wrapping around the south elevation. The porch is supported by unfinished log posts and enclosed with a shallow unfinished wood balustrade with a diamond design often seen in Adirondack camps from this period. The double entry is centered on the elevation and flanked with sash window sidelights, and two window openings have been replaced with vinyl fixed picture windows. Another notable feature of the façade is a large front-gable dormer with a screened-in sunroom, and a rustic diamond-pattern balustrade that is flush to the dormer screens/windows. There are two smaller gable-front dormers with casement wood windows flanking either end of this elevation. The south elevation includes portions of the western façade porch where it wraps around, continuing the diamond decorative balustrade and posts. On the south elevation, the porch becomes a two-story, front-gable projecting porch with an enclosed sunroom on the second floor. The north and south elevations also each include one separate projecting front-gable porch with the same supports and balustrades. Windows throughout the house are largely four-over-four wood sash configured as either single, double, or tripartite forms. The north elevation includes another full-width porch, this one with an asphalt shed roof supported by Y-beams, with no balustrade. It retains a centered entry with sidelights and a transom surround, and several fully divided wood tripartite windows. A cross-gable dormer with five wood casement windows extends the width of the roofline.

Interior

The interior of the Lake House conveys significant integrity with several key historic features such as original wood flooring, board-and-batten walls, and much of the original plan throughout. The expansive living room (photo 4) includes a large stone full-height fireplace and three hand-hewn support beams. The dining room (photo 5) also includes a stone fireplace recessed behind a naturally stained board-and-batten arch contiguous with the wall. The kitchen is historic, with cabinets and Formica counters likely dating from the mid-twentieth century. There are two bedrooms off the kitchen with an original shared jack-and-jill bathroom, including a claw-foot porcelain tub. One bedroom served as the maid's room (with the bathroom attached), and the other was originally an icehouse attached only to the Lake House kitchen. They were converted to sleeping quarters in 2000. The former icehouse displays naturally finished, knotty pine walls, and a structural wooden beam cross

² Richard Longstreth, *A Guide to Architecture in the Adirondacks* (Adirondack Architectural Heritage, 2017).

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tie (photo 7). The original, ventilating cupola above this room on the exterior recalls the original purpose. All upstairs rooms have four-foot knee walls and slanted ceilings, wide board and batten paneling naturally stained. The screened-in dormer window facing the lake is part of a secondary bedroom, accessible through French doors.

Alterations to the Lake House are modest and include the conversion of the icehouse to a bedroom, the addition of the half-bath, re-framing of the dining room fireplace. For additional heat in cold seasons, a free-standing gas fireplace and a tile hearth were installed in the northeast corner of the living room, adjoining the main stone fireplace.

The Beach House (1918) – One Contributing Building

Originally referred to as boathouse, this one-and-a-half-story modest Craftsman building is now referred to as the Beach House (photos 8-10). It is located about twenty feet back from the shoreline. Like the lake house, its foundation consists of vertical log posts, and it boasts painted board-and-batten siding. The western façade (photo 8) faces the lake and includes a projecting shed porch supported by unstained logs with a smaller walk-out porch with a gable roof on the second story, accessible via French doors. There is a single entry and a roll-up door. The first floor is one room used for boat and equipment storage, fishing tackle, and as a shop. The walls are open to the studs and stained dark brown, with a paneled pine board ceiling. The second story was weatherized and rehabilitated into a small apartment in 2015, including a bedroom, sitting room, and bathroom. There is another projecting porch on the north façade with an open ground floor and a screened-in second floor.

The Carriage House (1918) – One Contributing Building

The Carriage House (photo 11 and 12) mimics the Lake House in its Craftsman design and detailing. It is a one-and-a-half story wood-frame structure with a front-gable room and two cross-gable dormers. It is situated at the entrance to the building compound behind the Lake House, about 150 feet back from the shoreline. The foundation is a poured concrete slab. The three-bay façade has two pairs of hinged barn doors on either end with a glazed and wood paneled entry between, and a projecting front-gable porch on the second floor (photo 11). This porch is supported by open timber rustic bracketing, with a wood balustrade and two single entry doors.

Inside, the first story includes a workshop, storage, and laundry (photo 12). The first-floor walls are open to the studs and untreated, with bead-board ceiling. The second-floor apartment was remodeled in 2017 and includes a sitting room, two bedrooms and a bathroom. The sitting room and one bedroom each have a door opening to a shared, small open porch. A second-floor room probably added in the 1920s onto the back of the original structure, supported by exterior posts, contained a toilet, sink and metal shower stall.

Wintergreen (1965) – One Contributing Building; Architect: William Distin

Exterior

Wintergreen was designed to be a more comfortable and private dwelling for Richard and Marjorie Moore, whose family owned The Moorings from 1920-28 and 1945-2002. Mrs. Moore wanted a house with more convenient, modern features, separate from noisy grandchildren. The one-story rectangular building achieved a combination of the fine workmanship of a comfortable craftsman home and the natural elements and feel of an Adirondack camp. Wintergreen contrasts with the earlier buildings on the site with a long, low, and horizontal

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profile clearly influenced by ranch forms that sprung up throughout the country after World War II. The building sits some sixty-five feet to the east of the shoreline, with every major room containing picture and/or casement windows that provide good views of the lake and mountains. The foundation is concrete block with a full basement under the kitchen and utility room, providing room for furnace, hot water heater and other equipment, and an enclosed crawl space under the rest of the house. It has an asphalt side gable roof, with cross-gable bays on either entrance (the east and west elevations). Wintergreen's exterior is clad largely with cedar shingles, with vertical cedar siding under the gables. The western elevation (photo 14) facing the lake includes a locally sourced stone terrace, a projecting full-height window bay with a hip roof, and several original casement windows. A large stone chimney rises from the center of the structure. The opposite elevation facing east (photo 13) includes a large central gable bay with a recessed entry and a full-height divided picture window. Throughout the house the windows are largely original metal casement with retractable built-in screens.

Interior

The interior contains wide-board pine floors in the great room and bedrooms and butternut, knotty pine, cherry and fir boards of various widths throughout in walls, ceilings, and extensive built-in cabinetry. Every door was specifically chosen with alternating grain to reflect the light in contrasting ways. In the great room (photos 15 and 16), a vaulted ceiling, large carrying beams, wrought iron hardware, a large stone fireplace, and a half-octagonal extension for the dining area facing the lake contribute to a dramatic space. The octagonal bay on the west serves as a dining area with the exterior stone terrace adjoining the dining and kitchen area. Two bedrooms with large picture windows face the lake. One, the master bedroom (photo 18), has a small dressing closet including a built-in desk and drawers, leading to a full bathroom with built-in mid-century tub/shower. A small third bedroom and bathroom, probably designed for a maid or helper, are beyond the kitchen and utility room. The kitchen is particularly notable as it is original, with cork floors, brick walls, original knotty pine cabinets, and Formica counters (photo 17).

Wintergreen has undergone few alterations. In 2018 a casement window was replaced with a tripartite window casement window to mimic the original. It has otherwise remained unchanged.

Children's Playhouse/Treehouse (ca. 2010) – One Non-Contributing Building

This non-contributing children's playhouse/treehouse (photo 19) faithfully matches the camp's board and batten green siding with white trim, rustic railings, and interior knotty-pine finish. It recalls a treehouse of unknown architectural style that was once located above the small stream running through the property just beyond where Wintergreen now stands.

Woodshed (ca. 2010) – One Non-Contributing Structure

This free-standing, post-and-beam, lean-to-shaped woodshed is located opposite the Carriage House and is non-contributing due to its recent age.

The entire property retains excellent integrity, with all buildings in their original locations and setting. Property owners on Big Wolf Lake are parties to an Owners Agreement which includes provisions that ensure the forest environment in and around the camp sites retains its natural character. Like all Adirondack estates, the wooded location of the property is deeply significant, as is the use of natural materials and craftsmanship. The Moorings

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reflects the historic sense of Adirondack aesthetics as it developed in the region at the turn of and through the mid-twentieth century. In the few instances where additional materials have been added, as in finishing the apartments over the Beach House and Carriage House, the new materials are compatible with the existing materials.

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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.

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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1918-1965

Significant Dates

1918; 1965

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Frederick Kelley (1918 architect)

William G. Distin (1965 architect)

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance, 1918-1965, is initiated with the construction of the Lake House, Beach House, and Carriage House, and terminates when William G. Distin's accompanying residence, Wintergreen," was completed.

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Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

N/A

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

The Moorings is an architecturally significant Adirondack camp complex located within the Adirondack Park in Franklin County, New York. Built on the eastern shore of Big Wolf Lake, which encompasses 1,028 acres, it is located near the High Peaks Region in the Town of Tupper Lake. The nominated resource represents two distinct eras of building design in the Adirondack Mountains. It is a particularly excellent example of the later work of Saranac Lake architect William G. Distin, who completed a residence for owners Richard and Marjorie Moore in 1965. Nicknamed “Wintergreen,” Distin’s one-story rustic modern residence followed an earlier period of development initiated by Arthur Rice circa 1917. Rice was an outdoorsman who was the chief executive of the Camp Fire Clubs of America. Rice commissioned New York City architect Frederick P. Kelley to design a more modest version of the Adirondack Great Camps he would have been familiar with through his work. Kelley’s extant structures convey the rudimentary rustic architecture of their time but do not fully embrace the idea that functions should exist independently from each other by assigning them to individual buildings. The “lake house” served as the primary dwelling, the secondary “beach house” as a boat house, and a carriage house, of course, sheltered vehicles and was used for storage and staff housing. The Moorings lacks the high degree of self-sufficiency and fully fleshed-out compound plans that Great Camps entailed, as defined by the 1986 *Great Camps of the Adirondacks Thematic Resources* document.³ However, one can see their influence through the use of natural materials for these buildings situated in a secluded location.

In contrast to the 1918 buildings, Distin allowed for a singular residence to shelter residents and guests. A native of Plattsburgh in the northernmost reaches of New York, Distin moved his way up to serve as a protégé of perhaps the most noted Adirondack architect of his time, William Coulter. Under Coulter, he learned how to apply natural aesthetics so integral to Adirondack recreational designs, but, over time, Distin found his own voice by combining these early rustic models with a more eclectic and modern application of materials and forms. As one of his last projects, Wintergreen survives as an excellent example of Distin’s ability to conceptualize both the past and the present. As such, The Mooring is being nominated under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as an important work of William Distin, and for its ability to reflect two related, yet distinct, building periods in the Adirondack region.

Narrative Statement of Significance

Ownership and Property History

The Moorings is centrally located in the Tri-Lakes Region of the Adirondacks, near Lake Placid, Saranac Lake, and Tupper Lake. The Adirondack Park is famous for being the largest publicly protected area in the contiguous

³ Larry E. Gobrecht, *Great Camps of the Adirondacks Thematic Resources*, (NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, July 1986).

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United States; its six million acres are a unique blend of private and public legally protected land.⁴ The property is located about three miles north of the Village of Tupper Lake on a wooded plot of land on the eastern shore of Big Wolf Lake. Prior to settlement circa 1844 the area served as hunting grounds for indigenous peoples such as the Mohawk and Oneida, two Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) tribes who arrived around 1,200 to 4,000 years ago. For many years the region exemplified the Haudenosaunee concept of the “Dish With One Spoon” in which a territory was shared with other indigenous people during times of peace. But by the eighteenth century the arrival of colonists in New York had reduced indigenous populations, caused inter-tribal conflicts, driving both Iroquoian and Algonquian tribes further in the Adirondacks up to the St. Lawrence River. After the Mohawk sided with British loyalists during the American Revolution they were stripped of their lands in Northern New York, with many dispersing across the St. Lawrence River to Canada.⁵

Tupper Lake became the major center of the lumber industry in northern New York in the nineteenth century, achieving a peak population of over 5,000 year-round residents through the mid-twentieth century.⁶ Large lumber mills occupied extensive frontage on Tupper Lake’s Raquette Pond and sent millions of feet of lumber to American and Canadian markets first by river, and eventually by rail. The lumber industry attracted French Canadians, Poles, Swedes, Lebanese, Jews and other ethnic groups who worked in the forests or the mills. Businesses supporting the industry turned Tupper Lake into a notably multi-ethnic community.

Shortly following the lumber industry, outdoor recreation flourished in the Adirondacks, particularly after the Civil War. Sporting men were inspired by Romantic accounts published by James Fenimore Cooper, and later from wilderness guides. They initially camped out in primitive tents and open shelters under the care of Adirondack hunting and fishing guides, but hotels and boarding houses soon emerged to provide more comfortable accommodations for sportsmen and their families. “As more and more outsiders experienced the pleasures of the mountains, lakes, wildlife and recreation; as postwar prosperity spread; as cities became increasingly crowded and dirty; and as Adirondack real estate remained relatively cheap, many visitors decided to purchase their own property and contract for the building of their own camps for seasonal occupation.”⁷ This trend continued into the early twentieth century, when The Moorings was built, and arguably continues to this day.

The original Moorings camp was constructed in 1918 on a ten-acre parcel sold by Ferris Meigs to Arthur Rice in November 1917.⁸ Presumably, the camp was completed within the following year, which was the norm among the early camps of Big Wolf Lake. Meigs, from Bronxville, New York, was president of the Santa Clara

⁴ “Adirondack Park and the Catskills,” New York State Archives, accessed March 11, 2025, https://www.archives.nysed.gov/research/environment/research/park_overview.shtml

⁵ “Adirondacks: Native Americans,” National Park Service, last updated November 21, 2018, <https://www.nps.gov/articles/adirondacks-native-americans.htm>

⁶ Louis J. Simmons, *Mostly Spruce and Hemlock: Historical Highlights of Tupper Lake and the Town of Altamont*, (self-published, 1976).

⁷ Howard Kirschenbaum, Introduction. F-Stop Fitzgerald and Richard McCaffrey, *Adirondack Style: Great Camps and Rustic Lodges*, (Universe/Rizzoli, 2011), 7.

⁸ Lucia Meigs Andrews, *Big Wolf Lake 1916-1966*, (self-published, 1967).

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Lumber Co. which owned about 100,000 acres in the Tupper Lake area.⁹ Meigs likely avoided heavily logging the shoreline where camps might eventually be built, but it is possible the property was partially cleared. In 1915, Rice purchased a 4,600-acres parcel, including the entirety of Big Wolf to create a vacation community for his family and friends from Bronxville. The Rice camp was among the first group of properties developed on the lake between 1916-18.¹⁰ As Executive Secretary of the Campfire Club of America, Rice was a national leader in the camping-scouting movement in the U.S. in the early twentieth century. National scouting commissioner Dan Beard credited Rice with introducing camping practices and equipment later adopted by the Boy Scouts of America.¹¹ Rice was also interested in the concept of “vanishing” native Americans and adorned the walls of his Big Wolf camp with photographs and indigenous artifacts from his Western travels.

Rice’s 1918 camp was designed by New York architect Frederick P. Kelley, of whom little is known. The camp Kelley designed consisted of three main buildings—now known as the Lake House, Beach House, and Carriage House. The Lake House contained a large living room, large dining room, three bedrooms for family, a kitchen, another bedroom for staff, many screened and open porches, and an attached icehouse. Two additional guest bedrooms were in the Beach House, along with boat and equipment storage. Two additional staff bedrooms were in the Carriage House, along with garage, storage and workspaces. The complex was built to accommodate the Rice family, but three or four staff lived on site seasonally and provided cooking, cleaning and property maintenance services.

Due to ill health, Rice sold the property after only two years to T. Channing Moore and Beatrice (“Bertha”) Stone Moore, also from Bronxville. The Moores eponymously named their camp “The Moorings.” At the time of their purchase, Channing was a member of the New York State Assembly for Westchester County’s 1st district, serving from 1920-26 and again in 1929. Bertha Moore was also an active Republican, serving as head of the Franklin County Republican Committee, and alternate delegate to the Republican National Convention in 1928 and 1932. The Moorings offered the family a rural escape from Bronxville with plenty of room for their three children.

In 1928, the Moores sold the property to Thomas and Anna Grahame of Bronxville. Thomas Grahame was a successful insurance broker in Connecticut, and like their predecessors, they had three children. Their daughter Jeanne later recorded a number of stories and memories of their family’s years at Big Wolf Lake.¹² After Thomas died in 1938, his widow Anna rented out the Moorings for several years, including two years to a family of Middle East diplomats. Anna died in 1944 and sold the property the following year to someone already familiar with it – Bertha Moore, now Bertha Moore Fearon.

⁹ Louis J. Simmons, *Mostly Spruce and Hemlock: Historical Highlights of Tupper Lake and the Town of Altamont*, (self-published, 1976).

¹⁰ Lucia Meigs Andrews, *Big Wolf Lake*.

¹¹ Dan Beard, “Woodcraft Stunts,” *Boys’ Life: The Boy Scouts’ Magazine*, Vol 8, No. 9 (September 1918), 21 & 46.

¹² The document was shared with the author by Jeanne’s granddaughter along with other recollections in an interview with Howard Kirschenbaum at Big Wolf Lake, c. 2018.

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After her husband T. Channing had died in 1931, Bertha married George Fearon, an attorney and politician from Syracuse. Fearon was a leader in New York Republican politics. He had been a New York state assemblyman for four years, a state senator for fifteen years (1921-36), candidate for the Republican nomination for governor in 1930, president pro tempore of the Senate from 1931-32, minority leader of the Senate from 1933-36, delegate to the 1932 Republican National Convention, and delegate to the 1938 New York State Constitutional Convention, among other activities.¹³

The demise of the Fearon's marriage in 1953, followed by Bertha's death in 1959, precipitated another generation of the Moore family to be primary caretakers of the property. Two years earlier, Bertha had deeded the property to her son Richard and his wife, Marjorie Kenyon Moore. Over the next decade, their two children grew and had their own families, and the Moores desired more room, privacy, and conveniences to serve as a comfortable family retreat. In 1965, the Moores commissioned architect William Distin to create a new winterized dwelling for them, designed to be complementary to the existing buildings but distinct as a modernized rustic home. They named it "Wintergreen." The Moores presided over their expanded camp until Marjorie's death in 2002 (Richard died in 1991). The property was then sold to Eric and Mary Mollman of Illinois who, with their four children, enjoyed the Moorings for twelve years. In 2014, the Mollmans sold the property to the present owner, Howard Kirschenbaum and his wife Mary Rapp (now deceased).

The Evolution of the Adirondack Camp

The 1918 camp that Kelley designed for Arthur Rice is a small but outstanding example of a historic American architectural model distinctive to New York State. Following the Civil War, published guides and romantic accounts of the Adirondacks rapidly drew well-to-do and prominent families to the mountains to experience first-hand the outdoor activities that dazzled their imaginations. Hotels and resorts offered increasingly sophisticated accommodations that offered guests respite from crowded cities, typical social expectations, and diseases such as Tuberculosis. The natural rustic architecture that arose from their desire helped further appreciation for the region, increased economic prosperity, and enabled middle and upper economic classes to undertake construction of their own woodland camps, which grew in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in number, size and sophistication. Depending on the size of the property, number and scale of the buildings, architectural refinement, and degree of artistry and craftsmanship in the construction, different modifiers have been attached to such properties. They might still be referred to as *camps*, *cabins*, or *lodges*, sometimes preceded by the adjectives *Adirondack* or *rustic*; but as one moves along the continuum from simple to grandiose, this style of camp architecture has alternately been referred to by such terms as *grand*, *great*, *luxury*, *decorous*, *decorative*, *artistic*, and others. In 2000 the National Park Service published the *Adirondacks Camps National Historic Landmarks Theme Study* which outlines the distinguishing characteristics of Adirondack camps:

"Adirondack camps shared three characteristics that differentiated them from other American resort property types. First, each had a distinctive compound plan consisting of separate buildings for separate functions. In this aspect it was an early expression of freeing the

¹³ "Debate Starts in Senate on Record Budget," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, March 11, 1930, p. 3.

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residential plan from the formal constraints imposed by interior circulation that would later manifest itself in twentieth century American house design. Second, the close integration of camp buildings with the existing natural features of their sites was unprecedented among American resort development in its time...And third, the Adirondack camp represented the first and fullest application of a rustic aesthetic in American buildings. This rustic character was directly influenced by indigenous building traditions in the Adirondack region as well as the well-established popular taste for naturalistic forms previously used in English gardens and urban parks...”¹⁴

The three contributing buildings constructed at The Moorings in 1918—Lake House, Beach House and Carriage House—embody some of the distinctive characteristics of Adirondack camp construction and design, with its compound plan, natural materials, and remote lakeside location. The Moorings somewhat follows a clustered compound plan, whereas several buildings serve multiple functions. The Beach House served the dual functions of boathouse and guest cabin, with the first floor containing a boat storage room, fishing tackle room, and workshop and the second floor containing originally two bedrooms, a bathroom, and porches. The National Historic Landmarks theme nomination recognized the trend in the early twentieth century to move from the widely dispersed compound of a separate building for each function:

“Two types of compound plans developed in the Adirondack camp. In its most extreme form [the decentralized plan], all or nearly all buildings had separate functions....The second type, referred to as ‘clustered’ herein, continued the tradition of disbursing the program of the country house among more than one building, but it combined several functions, resulting in groupings of fewer and larger buildings than the decentralized type.”¹⁵

One reason for this change was in the size of properties on which camps were built. In the late nineteenth century, many or most Adirondack camps were, in fact, great estates—country houses surrounded by hundreds or thousands of acres of Adirondack woods and waters. They had room to spread out, siting their cabins and lodges across wide swaths of shoreline and situating their farm operations and stables a good distance from the main camp. For example, the 13,000-acre Santanoni Preserve (a National Historic Landmark) includes a gate lodge complex at the edge of the town of Newcomb, a major farm operation farther into the estate, a stable and caretaking buildings a half mile from the main camp, and the main camp compound on Newcomb Lake just under five miles from the Gate Lodge. Over time, as more families wanted their own camp in the wilderness, it became typical to purchase smaller parcels, including lots on subdivided lake shores. The smaller lot sizes made it less feasible to spread out, made farm operations impractical, and spurred designers to combine functions into fewer buildings, as exemplified at the Moorings.

After 1900 it became increasingly less common for camps to be largely self-sufficient. This trend is readily understandable in the context of evolving transportation in the Adirondacks. In the late nineteenth century, there

¹⁴ Wesley Hanes, “Adirondack Camps National Historic Landmarks Theme Study,” (National Park Service, 2000), p. 3.

¹⁵ Wesley Haynes, “Adirondack Camps Theme Study,” p. 15-16

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was little or no rail service into the heart of the mountains, and the reliance on horse-drawn wagons and sleighs over rough roads in all seasons made deliveries of food and building supplies difficult and unreliable. Therefore, it was incumbent upon camp owners and managers to be able to produce and store everything they needed for large-scale camp operations for the summer. But by the twentieth century, railroads, automobiles, trucks, and improved roads made the import of fresh food and supplies more convenient and reliable, so there was no longer the need for camps to be self-sufficient. Building materials, furniture, food and supplies were all readily available through local stores and businesses. Self-sufficiency became the exception rather than the norm for Adirondack camp design and operation from the early twentieth century to today.

In short, the 1918 Moorings construction illustrates how the functions of an otherwise decentralized camp were downsized in comparison to very large camps like Santanoni that were built just ten to fifteen years earlier. And by 1965 when Wintergreen was built the notion of separate structures was entirely foreign. The home provided additional living, dining and sleeping, and practical spaces all under one roof. Only a woodshed was kept separate (replaced in the early 2000s and not contributing).

Early Twentieth Century Adirondack Architecture

With the imaginative use of native building materials in construction and/or decoration to create a picturesque, rustic effect, the Moorings, particularly the earliest buildings, exhibit classic nineteenth and twentieth-century features such as:

- Vertical board and batten siding with wide, rough boards inside and out
- Multiple porches with rough cedar log posts, trim and railings. This work utilizes straight logs and branches in a combination of vertical, horizontal, diagonal, and diamond-shaped designs, which create a strong geometric pattern that is architecturally striking. The railings and log work in the eave of the Beach House screened porch are a particularly good example of the camp's decorative rusticity
- The Lake House's large covered, front porch, faced with rustic posts and railings and rough-cut wooden lattice below the deck level, creates a dramatic architectural feature characteristic of early large Adirondack camps and summer resorts.
- Interiors that contain hand-hewn, wooden support beams and wooden joists
- Rough cut granite stone fireplaces dominating primary spaces

The 1918 Moorings buildings' rustic and artistic features combine to create an impressive, rustic rather than polished, Adirondack camp, pleasing in its natural setting, proportions, rustic materials, craftsmanship, and retaining a high degree of historic integrity. As one of the earliest recreational destinations in the United States, Adirondack architecture became synonymous with suitable outdoor structures and served as a prototype for the National Park Service's grand lodges throughout the American West.¹⁶

¹⁶ Harvey Kaiser, *Landmarks in the Landscape: Historic Architecture in the National Parks of the West*, (Chronicle Books, LLC, 1997).

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William G. Distin, Architect

Influence and Early Career

Wintergreen, constructed in 1965, represents the work of one of the Adirondack region's most distinguished and prolific architects, William G. Distin (1874-1970). Distin enjoyed a seven-decade career as a leading architect in the Adirondacks, following the direct historical lineage of William West Durant (1850-1934), the father of the Adirondack Great Camp design. Distin's direct mentor was William Coulter (1865-1907), the first trained architect to practice full time in the Adirondacks. He came to Saranac Lake in 1896 to cure his tuberculosis and soon became the preferred architect in the Saranac Lake region. Coulter's style was defined in part by log-veneered chalet forms with polework screens, trusses, and exposed interior structures as decoration.¹⁷ He was a prolific designer of grand artistic camps for wealthy clients, including Moss Ledge (built in 1898, listed on the National Register in 2000), the playhouse at Great Camp Sagamore (built in 1902, listed as a National Historic Landmark in 2000), Prospect Point Camp (completed in 1905, National Register-listed in 1986), and Eagle Island Camp designed for former U.S. Vice President Levi P. Morton (1902, a National Historic Landmark in 2004). Coulter never quite got over his illness, which was likely exacerbated by his intense work schedule. He died in 1907 at the age of only forty-two.¹⁸

William G. Distin (1884-1970) was born in Montreal but grew up in Plattsburg, New York where his father, William L. Distin was an artist and photographer. In 1899, the family moved to Saranac Lake where young William graduated from high school in 1901. For the next seven years, he worked as a draftsman for William Coulter and Max Westhoff, learning the fundamentals of the regional Swiss-inspired style his predecessors had helped pioneer. After Coulter died in 1907, Distin moved to New York City to earn his architecture degree from Columbia University. After graduating, he relocated to Chicago to work under S.S. Beman designing houses in Highland Park and traveled for a short time to Europe. Upon returning to Saranac Lake in 1912, he officially joined his old firm, Coulter & Westhoff (run solely by Max Westhoff since Coulter's death). Aside from a 1917 stint for the Army building hospitals, Distin remained in Saranac Lake, taking over the firm from Westhoff after World War I. For the next half-century, until his death in 1970, Distin worked as an architect in Saranac Lake, mostly in solo practice, occasionally with partners or associates, including William Scopes, Arthur Wareham, and Ron DeLair. Wareham joined the firm in 1950 and became partner in 1953, and DeLair joined in 1969 and became partner in 1970 when Distin died. During much of his career, his son, William G. Distin, Jr. ("Mo") was often the builder on his father's projects.¹⁹

Distin worked on a wider variety of projects than his mentor Coulter for a number of reasons. With the invention of the automobile more middle and upper-middle class people could visit the Adirondacks or settle there year-round. There was a larger demand for more restrained residences, churches, and camps, and Distin obliged, although he also retained his reputation as a master architect of such great camps as Camp Wonundra, built in 1934 for William Rockefeller, Eagle Nest (1937), and Camp Minnowbrook (1948). He was a prolific designer of Adirondack-inspired churches; one of his earliest was the second St. Bernard's in Saranac Lake,

¹⁷ Harvey A. Kaiser, *Great Camps of the Adirondacks*, 2nd ed., (David R. Godine, 2020), p. 28.

¹⁸ Wesley Haynes, "Adirondack Camps Theme Study," p. 32.

¹⁹ Rachel Bliven and John Bonafide, National Register of Historic Places Nomination for Distin Cottage, 1991.

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which he was charged with completing as an apprentice to Coulter and Westoff in 1910. Later, he completed such works as St. Johns in the Wilderness (Paul Smiths, 1930); oversaw the relocation of St. Eustice in Lake Placid in 1926 (which was originally designed by Coulter); and re-built the Island Chapel on Upper Saranac Lake in 1958.²⁰ Circa 1940 he built Debar Pond Lodge in Franklin County (listed on the National Register in 2014). Distin also veered away from focusing mostly on private great camps, and designed some of the region's major hotels, including Whiteface Inn (Lake Placid), Saranac Inn (Upper Saranac Lake), and the Lake Placid Club. He also worked on schools, banks, and the 1932 Olympic Arena in Lake Placid.

Distin was an important figure in the evolution of the Adirondack Great Camp from picturesque to grand lodge. His major camps typically included a large main lodge with most of the functions of a typical house—living, dining, kitchen, sleeping. They could be used year-round. They had many of the signature design features of rustic Adirondack camps, but were more polished, both literally and figuratively. Distin preferred smooth logs and boards as seen at his camps Wonundra, Eagle Nest and Minnowbrook. Compared to Coulter's birch-bark-covered eaves at Prospect Point and extensive use of log screens as at Knollwood Club and Eagle Island, Distin prioritized comfort, offering his clients closets and built-in storage spaces, and modern innovations like up-to-date bathroom fixtures, kitchen appliances, and full concrete basements. In short, these grand residences felt like substantial year-round homes as much as they felt like camps. When J.Pierpont Morgan visited the 1895 Camp Uncas, now a National Historic Landmark, he was "roughing it." He had to walk from the Manor House to the dining room to get his meals and descend a flight of stairs from his bedroom to the basement to use a commode. When the Hochschilds visited Eagle Nest, built by Distin in 1926, they did not lack for any creature comforts or modern conveniences. Distin's mid-career grand camps still contained excellent rustic artistry and were sited sensitively within the woods, but his designs had a refinement that was far from the original nineteenth-century romantic prototypes inspired by indigenous homes, loggers' camps, and lean-tos.

William Distin at The Moorings

Distin continued to design Adirondack camps through the 1950s and 60s, although by this point his focus shifted to creating more modest abodes such as Wintergreen. With the rise of the ski industry and hiking, and a more secure middle class, the demand for various accommodations increased, and large, privately owned, self-sustaining complexes became few and far between. Once a large part of Distin's business, Great Camps saw their decline during the Great Depression and World War II. As the 1986 Thematic Resource notes, the War "curtailed the interest and ability of the wealthy to establish camps...Further, this date coincides with changing architectural styles turned firmly from the exuberance of the late Victorian period to the streamlined forms of the emerging modern period."²¹ Distin wisely pivoted to creating dwellings suitable to upper-middle class budgets during the last fifteen years of his life and recognized the shifting desire for more simple yet refined designs.

In 2000, the Big Wolf Lake Association compiled a spiral-bound book titled *The Great Camps of Big Wolf Lake*. Each of the thirty or so camp owners around the lake was invited to contribute a two-page entry

²⁰ Lee Manchester, "Historic Main Street: A Walking Tour," Lake Placid News, April 9, 2004, p. 7

²¹ Wesley Haynes, "Adirondack Camps Theme Study," p. 6.

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describing the history of their homes, the Moores included. Marjorie Moore's niece, Elizabeth contributed an entry that recalls how Distin designed Wintergreen as a winterized camp, and it was constructed by his son "Mo." In this document, a total of five camps on Big Wolf Lake were attributed to Distin, all dating from 1958-65.²² All of the Distin-designed camps on the lake survive, but with various levels of integrity. The earliest of the Distin camps on Big Wolf Lake appears to be the Wendt (now Pierce) camp, located about a half mile south of The Moorings on the eastern side of Big Wolf Lake. The granddaughter of the original owner, Wendy Pierce, recalled how, "Mr. Distin proposed that each room would be constructed of a different wood, though ultimately all rooms were constructed of pine except for the red birch veneer central hall."²³ The use of different woods for interior walls and ceilings is a hallmark of Distin's style, one which is fully on display in Wintergreen at the Moorings. Moreover, the woodwork was intentionally chosen with aesthetic considerations in mind. The interior walls and ceilings at Wintergreen are butternut, knotty-pine, heart pine, and cherry. Doors are custom designed to show the different colors and grains of the natural wood.

A careful comparison of Distin's work around Big Wolf Lake reveals many architectural and design choices he was fond of late in his career. The Distin houses in the area exhibit most of the following characteristics:

- A focus on housing multiple functions under one roof instead of separate buildings
- A "butterfly" or "sun trap" plan in which the building wraps around a patio or porch, creating a patio or stone terrace on the lake-facing elevation of the building. The preference for these porch designs over much more prominent wrap-around or screened porches allowed for unobstructed views from the interior.
- Exposed large beams (round logs or squared) with black forged iron braces throughout the house
- Use of a variety of woods in the interiors
- Modern kitchens of the time with Formica counters and contemporary appliances
- Areas of red brick on kitchen walls common among suburban houses at the time
- Black iron hoods for gas vents in the kitchen
- A circular staircase
- Metal casement windows
- Extensive use of custom-made, built-in closets, cabinets and drawers

Wintergreen exhibits all of these characteristics minus a circular staircase, and it stands out as a rare intact representative model of mid-century Adirondack camp architecture due its integrity. Because it was constructed as a year-round residence the building did not need to undergo extensive alterations, so features such as the original windows and kitchen remain as they were sixty years ago. Compared to Distin's earlier work at Eagle Nest or Debar Pond Lodge, Wintergreen was designed to be a smaller but more refined, year-round home that incorporated all its functions under one roof. The fundamental purpose remained the same—provide a reclusive, peaceful, and picturesque lodging to reconnect oneself to nature through both the built environment and its

²² Judy Blatchford (ed.), *Great Camps of Big Wolf Lake: 1916-2016*, (Big Wolf Lake Association Centennial Committee, 2016).

²³ Wendy Pierce, "Subject: Distin house 1957" Direct email to Howard Kirschenbaum, July 21, 2019.

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setting. Thus, Wintergreen's remote wooded setting and use of natural materials continues the legacy pioneered by architects like Durant and Coulter. Cedar shingles, stone steps and terrace, a large interior fireplace and great room, and oversized exposed support beams are reminiscent of earlier Adirondack decorative camps, large and small, but Wintergreen reflects how Distin embraced popular design trends of the time and merged them with historic precedents. His use of wood walls throughout was both a historic choice and a modern one— a hallmark feature of Adirondack homes was the use of wood throughout. But where the 1918 Kelley house on site incorporates wide board and batten walls, Distin instead chose wall boards of alternating widths, some with horizontal wainscoting alternatively rising vertical to the ceiling. Much of the interior reflects a more upscale version of the wood veneer paneling common to many basements, dens, and living rooms of the 1960s. Other differences are readily apparent outside. Where the 1918 Lake House is largely defined by large projecting porches with a riot of unfinished round cedar log posts, balustrades, and trim distinct from the house's board and batten siding, at Wintergreen Distin focused largely on the interior. Wintergreen's entrance is small and recessed, with simple stained squared porch supports meant to blend with the cedar shingle of the house. The lake-facing elevation has a stone patio, but it is unobtrusive and not even covered. Distin's choices reflect some functional changes in the twentieth century, such as the introduction of interior temperature control that allowed for greater comfort indoors and less need for sprawling patios. But his use of more refined materials such as stained shingles instead of roughly painted board and batten, glossy natural finish on wood instead of an untreated or natural appearance, and the presence of iron detailing and brick kitchen walls indicate that Distin was concerned with sophistication as much as traditional Adirondack building materials. At Wintergreen, Distin managed to balance the needs of a mid-twentieth century refined retreat with its natural setting and the precedents inherited from historic Adirondack camps. Wintergreen's polished yet natural appearance, as well as its focus on interior comfort exemplifies the modern evolution of Adirondack Architecture in the twentieth century.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

☐ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 9.62 Acres

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 44.283536 | Longitude: -74.467516 |
| 2. Latitude: 44.283696 | Longitude: -74.465505 |
| 3. Latitude: 44.281407 | Longitude: -74.465332 |
| 4. Latitude: 44.281724 | Longitude: -74.4676 |

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

The boundary is indicated by a heavy line on the enclosed map with scale.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary coincides with the legal lot lines of the nominated parcel west of Big Wolf Road , as identified on the county tax map (460.-1-13). The total nominated boundary is 9.62 acres.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Howard Kirschenbaum (owner) and Leslie Krupa, Historic Preservation Program Analyst (OPRHP)

organization _____ date 5/23/2025

street & number 365 Big Wolf Road East telephone 585-354-1055

city or town Tupper Lake state NY zip code 14604

e-mail hkirschenb@aol.com

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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

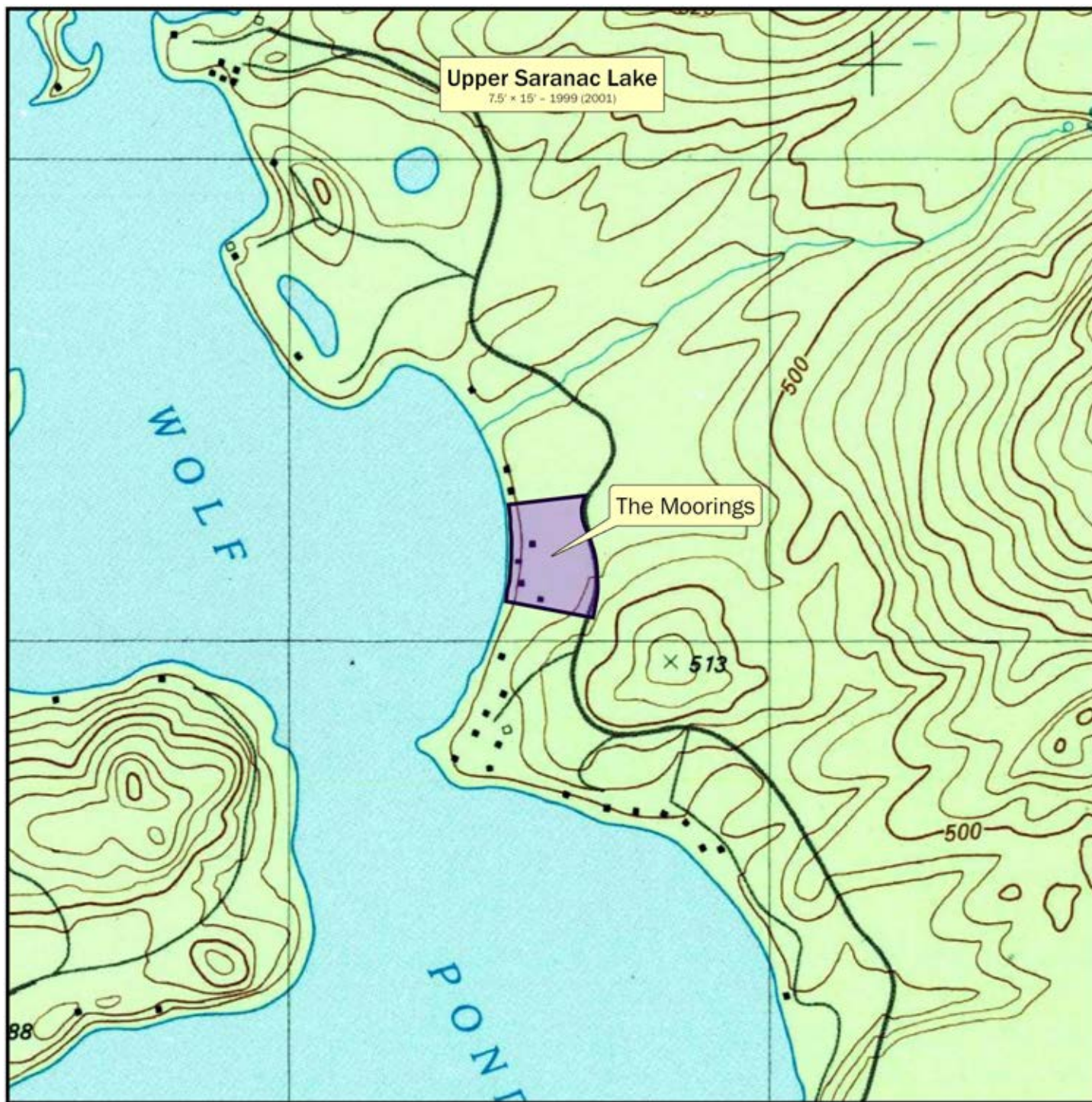
- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

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1:12,000

0 500 1000 ft



The Moorings



New York State
Parks, Recreation and
Historic Preservation

Projection: WGS 1984 UTM Zone 18N

Mapped 04/14/2025 by Matthew W. Shepherd, NYSHPO

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Point	Latitude	Longitude	Point	Latitude	Longitude
1	44.283536	-74.467516	3	44.281407	-74.465332
2	44.283696	-74.465505	4	44.281724	-74.467600



1:2,400

0 100 200 ft



Nomination Boundary (9.62 ac)



New York State
Parks, Recreation and
Historic Preservation

Projection: WGS 1984 UTM Zone 18N

New York State Orthoimagery Year: 2023

Mapped 04/14/2025 by Matthew W. Shepherd, NYSHPO

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1:2,400

0 100 200 ft

Projection: WGS 1984 UTM Zone 18N



Nomination Boundary (9.62 ac)



Tax Parcels

Franklin County Parcel Year: 2024



New York State
Parks, Recreation and
Historic Preservation

Mapped 04/14/2025 by Matthew W. Shepherd, NYSHPO

The Moorings

Name of Property

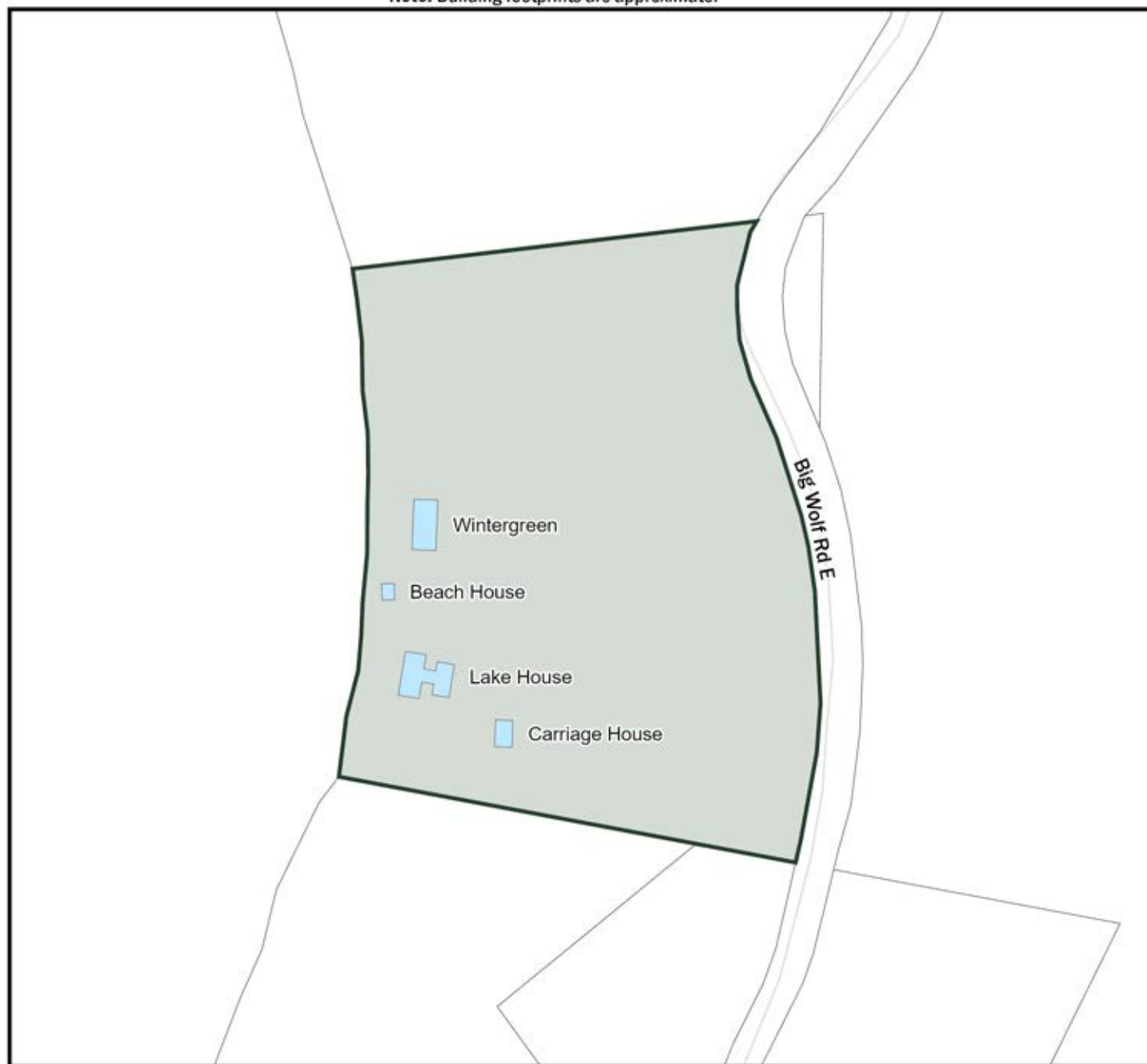
Franklin Co, NY

County and State

Contributing Resource Map

See Resource List for details

Note: Building footprints are approximate.



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0 100 200 ft

Projection: WGS 1984 UTM Zone 18N



Nomination Boundary



Contributing Resources

Franklin County Parcel Year: 2024



New York State
Parks, Recreation and
Historic Preservation

Mapped 04/14/2025 by Matthew W. Shepherd, NYSHPO

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Photographs:

Name of Property: The Moorings

City or Vicinity: Tupper Lake

County: Franklin State: New York

Photographer: All photographs were taken by the owners, Howard Kirschenbaum and Mary Rapp, except for photos number 2 and 11, which were taken by James Koon.

Date Photographed: 2014 – 2024. All photographs accurately depict the current condition and appearance of the property.

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

1 of 19: View facing east of Lake and Beach Houses in natural setting

2 of 19: Lake House, west facade, facing southeast

3 of 19: Lake House porch and window treatment, facing southeast

4 of 19: Lake House living room, facing fireplace.

5 of 19: Lake House dining room

6 of 19: Lake House master bedroom

7 of 19: Lake House bedroom in former icehouse

8 of 19: Beach House west elevation, facing east

9 of 19: Beach House north façade, detail of decorative rustic work

10 of 19: Beach House sitting room

11 of 19: Carriage House north façade

12 of 19: Carriage House sitting room and bathroom

13 of 19: Wintergreen east façade from driveway

14 of 19: Wintergreen west façade terrace overlooking lake

15 of 19: Wintergreen great room living area

16 of 19: Wintergreen great room facing octagonal dining area

17 of 19: Wintergreen kitchen east side

18 of 19: Wintergreen master bedroom in pine, cherry, butternut

19 of 19: Tree House, east façade, non-contributing

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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.