MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM

NR Eligible: yes ___ no X

Property Name: Sideling Hill Cut and Visitors Exhibit Center Inventory Number: WA-VI-060

Address: I-68 over Sideling Hill between Milepoint 73.5 and 74.5 Historic district: ___ yes X no

City: Hancock, MD Zip Code: 21750 County: Washington

USGS Quadrangle(s): Bellegrove

Property Owner: Maryland Department of Transportation, State Highway Ad Tax Account ID Number: ___

Tax Map Parcel Number(s): ___ Tax Map Number: 001

Project: I-68 from East of Mountain Road to Sideling Hill Rest Area Slo Agency: MD SHA

Agency Prepared By: MD SHA

Preparer's Name: Anne E. Bruder Architectural Historian Date Prepared: 7/21/2015

Documentation is presented in: Project Review and Compliance

Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation: X Eligibility recommended ___ Eligibility not recommended

Criteria: ___ A ___ B X C ___ D Considerations: ___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D ___ E ___ F ___ G

Complete if the property is a contributing or non-contributing resource to a NR district/property:

Name of the District/Property: ___

Inventory Number: ___ Eligible: ___ yes Listed: ___ yes

Field visit by MHT Staff ___ yes X no Name: ___ Date: ___

Description of Property and Justification: *(Please attach map and photo)*

Description:
The Sideling Hill Cut and Visitors Exhibit Center consists of a 1-mile section of I-68 between Milepoint 73.5 and Milepoint 74.5 on Sideling Hill in western Washington County. The 4-lane highway passes through a cut in the ridge that contains an 11-layer syncline (a concave fold of rock). The blasting and grading of Sideling Hill that revealed the syncline occurred as a result of the I-68 construction between 1983 and 1985. The Sideling Hill Visitors Exhibit Center and a concrete "Leaping Stag" pedestrian bridge were added in 1989 and opened to the public in 1991, after highway construction in Maryland had been completed. The Exhibit Center has been closed due to the State's budgetary issues since 2009, and the exhibits are now at the Hancock Museum.

The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA or SRC) blasted and graded 4.75 million cubic yards of rock and dirt from Sideling Hill in order to construct the cut as part of building I-68 between Hancock, Maryland and the Maryland-West Virginia boundary near Morgantown, West Virginia. SHA designed the 112 mile long, 4-lane highway, including the Sideling Hill Cut, as part of the state's interstate highway system, although the highway was constructed to help improve economic conditions in western Maryland. It provides the only interstate road through all the western Maryland Counties: Washington, Allegany and Garret and extends from north of Hancock, MD to Morgantown, West Virginia.

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Eligibility recommended ___ **Eligibility not recommended** X

Criteria: ___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D **Considerations:** ___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D ___ E ___ F X G

MHT Comments: Documentation doesn't support exceptional significance under consideration G.

Jim Gaidmore
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services 10/28/15 **Date**

P Kintz
Reviewer, National Register Program 10/29/15 **Date**

20150312

The work to construct the Sideling Hill section started in 1983, and required 28 months to complete. The V-shape cut in the ridge is 340 feet deep from the crest to the road level, which is 1,280 feet above sea-level. At road-level, the cut is only 200 feet wide, while at the top of the ridge it is 720 feet wide. The slopes are necessary to reduce the chance of rocks falling onto the highway. The road level contains two continuous lanes in each direction, paved shoulders, a grass median and metal guardrails. The ascending approaches include a third lane to accommodate slower moving vehicles. The Sideling Hill Cut provides a pass through the mountain that avoids the hairpin curves that characterize the older US 40 (National Pike).

There are two faces of the cut -- north and south and each has 4 benches or horizontal ledges that are 10 to 20 feet wide that slant towards the mountain to catch and hold falling rocks. 11 distinctive rock layers are visible and composed of conglomerate, sandstone, shale and coal-and-shale formations. A number of layers have become deeply weathered, and both cliff faces have rocky overhangs and scaring where rocks have fallen from the cliff faces.

Geographically, Sideling Hill is a ridge that extends from West Virginia through Maryland to Pennsylvania. The I-68 cut is located in western Washington County near the Allegany County boundary approximately 6 miles west of Hancock and about 25 miles east of Cumberland. This part of Maryland is a mountainous region with ridges and valleys that have provided challenges to road building in the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries.

Geologically, Sideling Hill is part of the Ridge-and Valley Physiographic Province of the Appalachian Mountains. The ridge is capped with erosion-resistant conglomerate and sandstone of the Mississipian (or early Carboniferous) geologic age (1). An exposed feature is the syncline or downward fold where I-68 cuts through the mountain.

The Visitors Exhibit Center is a four-story building which allows the visitor to view the different levels of the cut from various vantage points. Its angled form and colored concrete exterior were specifically selected to blend in with the mountain setting. The exhibit center sits on a raised foundation and the core of the building is a T-shape from an aerial view. The front façade faces east, and this has a full-story 14-light plate glass window in the first story in the east bay, and an 8-light plate glass window in the second story of the east bay. There is also an entrance to the second-story viewing balcony at the south end of the second story. The two projecting bays contain balconies and a sheltered one-story entrance in the north/northeast bay. A flight of stairs leads from the ground to the entrance. The building also contains men's and women's restrooms in the ground floor on the north side of the building. On the south side, a ramp supported by a piloti extends from the second floor to the pedestrian path and bridge. There is also a one-story building on the north side that contains vending machines, as well as concrete and wood stairs leading to the north slope and the I-68 Pedestrian Bridge. On the eastbound side of highway, there is a parking area and visitors' center contains vending machines and restrooms. The pedestrian bridge is a "Leaping Stag" example, which is a design with angled legs of concrete rather than vertical piers for the substructure. The legs are anchored into bases. The superstructure is a voided slab made of concrete that is topped with a wire cage to permit visitors to cross the highway. There are several openings in the cage to allow views of the cut's faces.

Significance:
Sideling Hill Cut and Visitors Exhibit Center exemplify SHA's engineering efforts to construct an interstate highway through the mountains in western Maryland, which exposed an important geological feature, the Sideling Hill syncline, which attracts visitors to the mountain to view it.

In the 1950s and early 1960s, the Maryland State Roads Commission(SRC) created the state's 20th century road system through various road building programs such as the 5 Year Plan, the 12 Year Program and "Go Roads." For Western Maryland, the SRC planned limited new highway construction that included the relocation or upgrades of portions of US 40 in Allegany and Garrett

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_____ _____

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unties. The SRC planned and constructed I-70 in Washington County in the 1960s. The SRC's plans for highway improvements in the western counties changed when the Federal Government passed the Appalachian Highway Development System (2), which legislated creating a network of 3500 miles of highways in the 12-state Appalachian region. Planners designed the highway system to help bring economic improvements to this area of the country. Since the federal government made funding available for the Appalachian region of the state, SHA was able to construct the new highway on the 50-50 cost basis since the costs were split between the federal and state governments.

The SRC announced planning studies for engineering in October 1965, and some construction began. The eastern section from I-70 in Hancock going west towards Sideling Hill opened in 1966, and a segment from the West Virginia border in Garrett County, opened as part of US 48 in 1967. By 1968, SHA had constructed the Cumberland Viaduct, SHA Bridge No. 0109600, through Cumberland. In 1971, Governor Marvin Mandel and Transportation Secretary Harry Hughes announced that construction of the I-68 section west of Cumberland would begin in fall 1971, while a new study for alignments between Cumberland and Hancock would also begin. Additional construction occurred during the 1970s, and by 1980, only a 15-mile stretch of the highway remained unbuilt, including the section through Sideling Hill. SHA studied several alternatives that would avoid impacting either the Breakneck Valley Historic District, a large rural historic district on the south side of the US 40, or the Green Ridge State Forest. Along with crossing Sideling Hill, the rural historic district and the state forest proved to be the most challenging resources and at least one lawsuit was filed to challenge construction of the highway. By carefully considering alternatives, SHA and the Governor were finally able to announce the choice of the northern route which more closely aligned with US 40 in 1983, and therefore reduce the likely impacts to buildings, businesses, farms and other environmental features. It was from such difficult circumstances that SHA learned how to work with outside agencies and groups, and to develop alternatives that were less impactful on historic resources and the environment.

SHA chose to cross Sideling Hill and create a cut section in order to avoid the hairpin curves that characterized the alignments of US 40 that dated to 19th and early 20th centuries. The decision of where to place the road came as a result of the Federal Government's interstate guidelines for grades of no more than 6% and the need for a long approach to get vehicles more easily over the mountain. The syncline's fold is coincidentally at the cut. If the cut had been made in other portions of the ridge, the full fold would not be visible because the fold gets deeper so that only one side would be seen if it were exposed. Synclines are common in Maryland's mountains and Town Hill which is an adjoining ridge has one as well, although not as significant. Following 28 months of construction, a 4.5 mile segment of I-68 (then called US 48 or the National Freeway) opened through Sideling Hill. The cut exposed the syncline. Although a common feature of ridges, Sideling Hill's cut is an outstanding example of the geological feature in the mountains in the eastern states. The blasting and grading required for the cut was SHA's largest earth-moving project in the 20th century and cost more than $44 million to complete. SHA was able to use aggregate from the cut in the highway pavement, which was an economical use of the material.

The highway pass through Sideling Hill opened on August 15, 1985. By 1986, the state had completed the 8.7-mile Sideling Hill section between I-70 and Green Ridge State Forest in Allegany County. The last section to be completed in 1991was the alignment through the Green Ridge State Forest.

The exhibit center and rest area were constructed in 1989, based on a design by J. E. Greiner Company Engineer and Architect Henry Arthur Dubay, Jr.(3), and opened in 1991, partly in response to requests from citizens for opportunities to learn about Maryland's geology. There was some confusion among members of the public because both the SHA and the Maryland Geological Survey kept describing "benches" in the slopes which lead to the expectation that a visitor could climb the slopes to see the cut more closely. "Bench" is an engineering term to describe the catch areas at the bottom of the different levels of cuts.

The buildings were maintained by the Department of Natural Resources and SHA and included exhibits and other information

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out the geological features found on the ridge. Due to budgetary constraints, the Visitors' Center was closed in 2009 and the exhibits were moved to the Hancock Museum on Main Street in Hancock (where they can be seen). However, the stairs to a mid-point in the north face of the cut and the pedestrian bridge observation area allows one to approach the rock faces. Visitors continue to stop on a daily basis to view the cut and learn about Maryland's geology.

I-68 provides an efficient connection from I-70 in Hancock through Allegany and Garrett Counties, since it links Baltimore, Hagerstown and Cumberland with Morgantown, WV and the highways going into the Ohio Valley. The highway also made Oakland more accessible, since southern US 219 intersects with I-68.

Sideling Hill Cut and the Visitors Exhibit Center retain integrity of design, workmanship, materials, feeling and association. When the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) identified parts of the Eisenhower Interstate System that would not qualify for the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's Interstate Exemption, Sideling Hill and a 1-mile long segment of I-68 were designed, based on the uniqueness of the syncline, and the engineering efforts to construct the highway through the mountain. Based on research conducted, the Sideling Hill Cut and Visitors Exhibit Center is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under Criterion A (events -- engineering) as a significant example of SHA's highway construction methods in the 1980s, and the efforts of SHA, the Maryland Geological Survey and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources to educate citizens about the state's geology by providing views to the mountain cut and its formation, as well as through the exhibits in the Visitors Center. Research conducted did not identify persons or architectural elements of state, local or national significance and the Sideling Hill Cut and Visitors Exhibit Center are not eligible for inclusion in the NRHP under Criteria B or C. NRHP Criterion D (information potential) was not included in this study.

Sideling Hill Cut and the Visitors Exhibit Center are eligible for inclusion in the NRHP under Criterion Consideration G, "Properties that Have Achieved Significance within the Past Fifty Years" as an example of highway construction that occurred between 1983 and 1991. The Sideling Hill Cut is an important example of a syncline found in the Ridge and Valley Geological Province in Maryland that was exposed between 1983 and 1985 through SHA's largest earth-moving event in the 20th century. One purpose of I-68's construction was to improve the three western Maryland counties economies, and becoming a tourist destination was one method. The Sideling Hill Cut attracts significant numbers of visitors, both those interested in geology and those who have little scientific knowledge, but appreciate nature's beauties as displayed at the cut.

The boundary for Sideling Hill is confined to SHA's right-of-way for I-68 from MP 73.5 to MP 74.5.

End Notes:
(1) A period 330,000,000 to 345,000,000 years ago
(2)The Appalachian Redevelopment Act of 1965, downloaded from http://acsc.lib.udel.edu/exhibits/show/legislation/item/8 9/25/15
(3) Little specific information about Dubay or his work has been found. According to his wife's (Hazel Instone Dubay, 1922-2015) obituary (Baltimore Sun, January 15, 2015), they married on October 7, 1945 after his return from World War II where he served as an Army Air Corps pilot. MDE's records identify Dubay as the architect of the Sideling Hill Exhibit buildings, and the AIA 1970 Architects Directory lists J.E. Greiner Company Inc. as an AIA member. Typical of engineering firms, only the Greiner principals are listed as members and the firm rather than an individual is usually credited for the design work. Another source suggests that Dubay graduated from Notre Dame University in 1955, but that has not been confirmed.

Sources Consulted:
Appalachian Development Highway System, Appalachian Regional Commission, http://www.arc.gov/adhs, downloaded 9/22/15
Counihan, Harold J., Moving Maryland Forward, A Century of Modern Road Building, Baltimore: Maryland State Highway

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Criteria: ___A ___B ___C ___D **Considerations:** ___A ___B ___C ___D ___E ___F ___G

MHT Comments:

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Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services **Date**

_____ _____
Reviewer, National Register Program **Date**

dministration, 2008
Martin, David, personal communication with Anne E. Bruder, October 15, 2015
Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Factsheet 17: Construction Information about the Sideling Hill Road Cut& Exhibit Center, downloaded from http://www.dnr.state.md.us/publiclands/western/sidelinghill.html, 05/20/2015
Maryland Geological Survey, Geology of the Sideling Hill Road Cut, downloaded from http://www.mgs.md.gove/geology/geology_tour/sideling_hill_detail.html, 05/20/2015
National Freeway (I-68), downloaded from http://www.roadstothefuture.com/I68_MD.html downloaded 9/25/15.
Von Forthuber, Ann Frances, "Sideling Hill, Maryland's Newest Jewel," Baltimore Engineer, May 1992: 16-19
The Baltimore Sun, Charles V. Flowers, "Maryland-Cincinnati Road Is Expected To Help Port," October 29, 1965, P. A8
"Mandel, Hughes Expediting I-70 Construction Westward," September 28, 1971, P. C14
Tom Horton and timothy M. Phelps, "'Total Accord' on western road was never more than skin deep," July 8, 1979, P. 17
Michael K. Burns, "Work begins on National Freeway Route approved through forest," November 6, 1983, P. C1
"Part of W. Md. Freeway now open to traffic," August 18, 1985, P. 3B
Joel McCord, "Northern route is chosen for last leg of the long-delayed National Freeway," November 20, 1985, P. B1
"State DOT pushes plans to build mountain center," December 9, 1986, P. 2C
Luther Young, "A Grand Slice of MD.'s Past," May 1, 1988, P. 1B
"State ready to build tourist center display for rocks of the ages," July 29, 1989, P. 14D
The Washington Post, Associated Press, "National Freeway Section Opens in Western Maryland," August 18, 1985, P. D7
Eugene L. Meyer, "Progress Whizzes Past on Md.'s National Freeway: U.S. Rte. 48 A road to Ruin for Local Stores," October 3, 1985, P. MDB1
Wikipedia, Sideling Hill downloaded from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sideling Hill, 05/02/2015

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Eligibility recommended **Eligibility not recommended**

Criteria: A B C D **Considerations:** A B C D E F G

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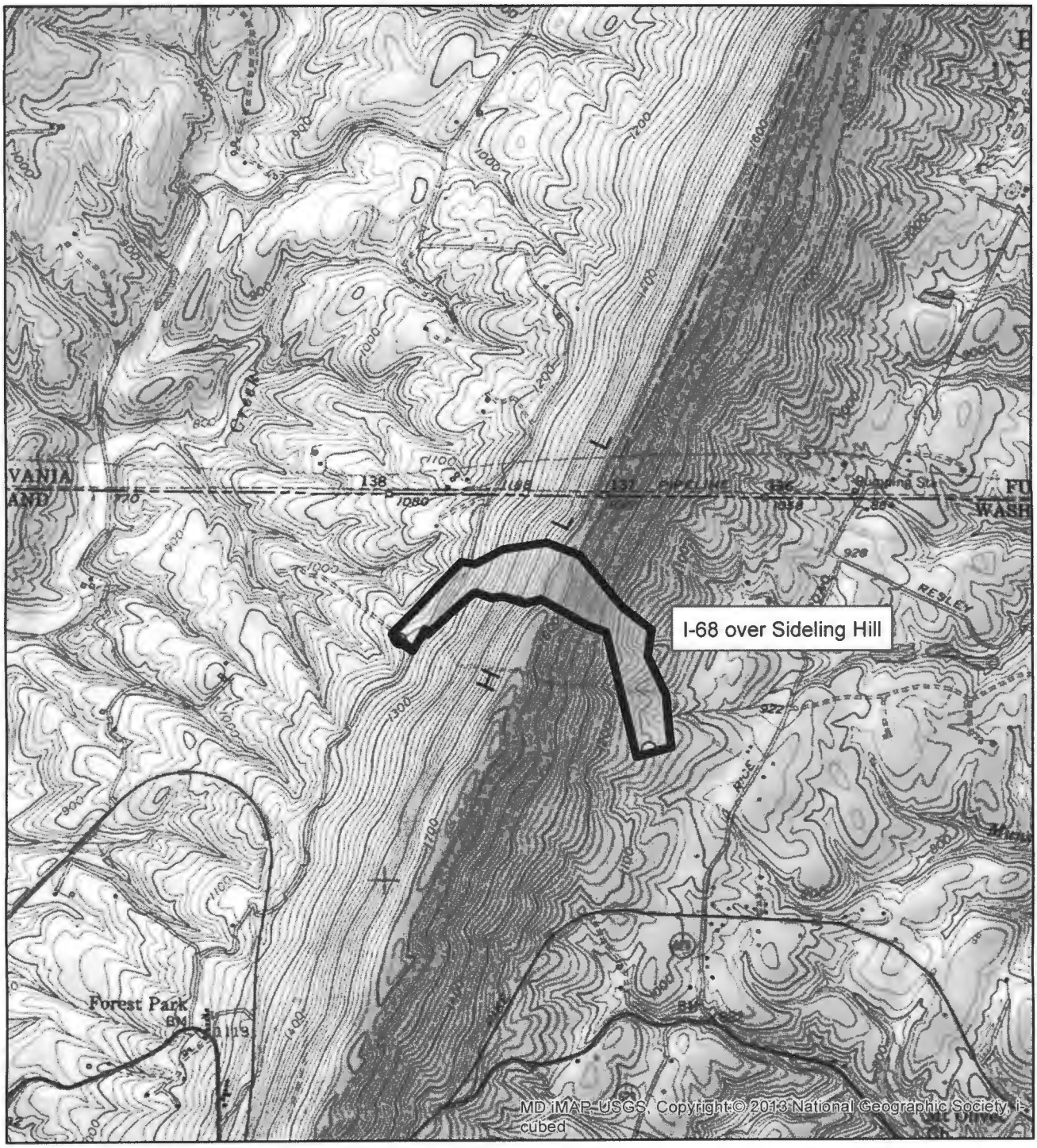
WA-VI-060

I-68 over Sideling Hill Site
Bellegrove USGS 7.5' Quadrangle
1:24,000



Maryland State Highway Administration
Cultural Resources Section
Photo Log

Project No.: WA251A21
Project Name: IS 068 I-68 over Sideling Hill Rest Area Slope Protection
MIHP No.: WA-VI-060
MIHP Name: Sideling Hill
County: Washington
Photographer: Anne E. Bruder
Date: April 23 and May 7, 2015
Ink and Paper Combination: Epson UltraChrome pigmented ink/Epson Premium Luster Photo Paper
CD/DVD: Verbatim, CD-R, Archival Gold

Image File Name	Description of View
WA-VI-060_2015-04-23_01.TIF	Sideling Hill vending machine building looking west
WA-VI-060_2015-04-23_02.TIF	Sideling Hill Exhibit Center looking southwest
WA-VI-060_2015-04-23_03.TIF	Pedestrian overpass looking south
WA-VI-060_2015-04-23_04.TIF	Looking west at south face of Sideling Hill cut
WA-VI-060_2015-04-23_05.TIF	Looking northwest at Sideling Hill north face from south side of I-68
WA-VI-060_2015-04-23_06.TIF	Sideling Hill Exhibit Center looking northeast
WA-VI-060_2015-04-23_07.TIF	I-68 pedestrian overpass looking west
WA-VI-060_2015-05-07_08.TIF	South face of Sideling Hill cut looking west
WA-VI-060_2015-05-07_09.TIF	North face of Sideling Hill cut looking west
WA-VI-060_2015-05-07_10.TIF	Sideling Hill rest facility on westbound I-68
WA-VI-060_2015-05-07_11.TIF	Sideling Hill – stairs to north face overlook
WA-VI-060_2015-05-07_12.TIF	Looking east at overpass and I-68 (general view of visitor's center)
WA-VI-060_2015-05-07_13.TIF	Top of south face of Sideling Hill

WA-II-060
SIDELING HILL
WASHINGTON CO, MD
BRUDER
4/23/15. MDSHPO
VENDING MACHINE BUILDING
LOOKING WEST
1/13

WA-VII-060
SIDELING HILL
WASHINGTON Co, MD
BRUDER
4/23/15 MD SHPO
EXHIBIT CENTER LOOKING SOUTHWEST
2/13

WA-VI-060
SIDELING HILL
WASHINGTON CO, MD
BRUDER
4/23/15 MD SHPO
PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE OVER I-65
LOOKING SOUTH
3/13


VICTOR CUSHWA

WA-VI-060

SIDELING HILL
WASHINGTON CO., MD

A. BRUDER
4/23/15 MD SHPO
LOOKING WEST AT SOUTH FACE
OF CUT

4/13

WA-II-060
SIDELING HILL
WASHINGTON CO MD
A BRUDGE
4/23/15
MD SHPO
LOOKING NORTH WEST AT NORTH FACE
5/13

WA-II-060
SIDELING HILL
WASHINGTON CO MD
ABRUDGR
4-23-15
MDSHAPO
EXHIBIT CENTERLOOKING NORTHEAST
6/13

WA-VI-060

SIDELING HILL

WASHINGTON CO MD

RUDER

4-23-15

MD SHPO

I-60 OVERPASS LOOKING WEST

7/13

WA-VI-060
SIDELING HILL
WASHINGTON CO, MD
ABRUDER
5-7-2015
MDSHPO
SOUTH FACE OF CUT - EROSION
8/13

WA-VI-060
SIDELING HILL
WASHINGTON CO MD
ABZUDEL
5-7-15
LOOKING WEST AT NORTH FACE-
EROSION

9/13

WA-VI-060
SIDELING HILL
WASHINGTON CO MD
ABRUDEZ
5/7/15
MD SHPO
REST FACILITY ON EB I-68
10/13

WA-VI-060
SIDELING HILL
WASHINGTON CO MD
A. BRUDER
5-7-15

STAIRS TO NORTH FACE OVERLOOK

1/1/15

WA-VI-060
SIDELING HILL
WASHINGTON Co. MD
A BRUDER
5-7-15
MDSHPO
LOOKING EAST AT OVERPASS

12/13

WA-II-060

SIDELING HILL

WASHINGTON CO MD

ANNE BRUDER

5/7/15

MDSHPO

TOP OF SOUTH FACE

13/13