

State of California & The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
PRIMARY RECORD

Primary #
HRI #
Trinomial
NRHP Status Code

Other
Review Code

Reviewer

Date

Listings

Page 1 of 7 *Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) Fresno & San Francisco Bicycle Mail Route
P1. Other Identifier: Hughes Hotel, Traveler's Hotel, Chukchansi Park

*P2. Location: ☐ Not for Publication ☒ Unrestricted

- *a. County Fresno and (P2c, P2e, and P2b or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)
*b. USGS 7.5' Quad Fresno South Date 1963 T 14S; R 20E; NE 1/4 of NE 1/4 of Sec 9; Mount Diablo B.M.
c. Address 1830 Tulare Street City Fresno Zip 93721
d. UTM: (Give more than one for large and/or linear resources) Zone , mE/ mN
e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, decimal degrees, etc., as appropriate)
APN 468-284-44T

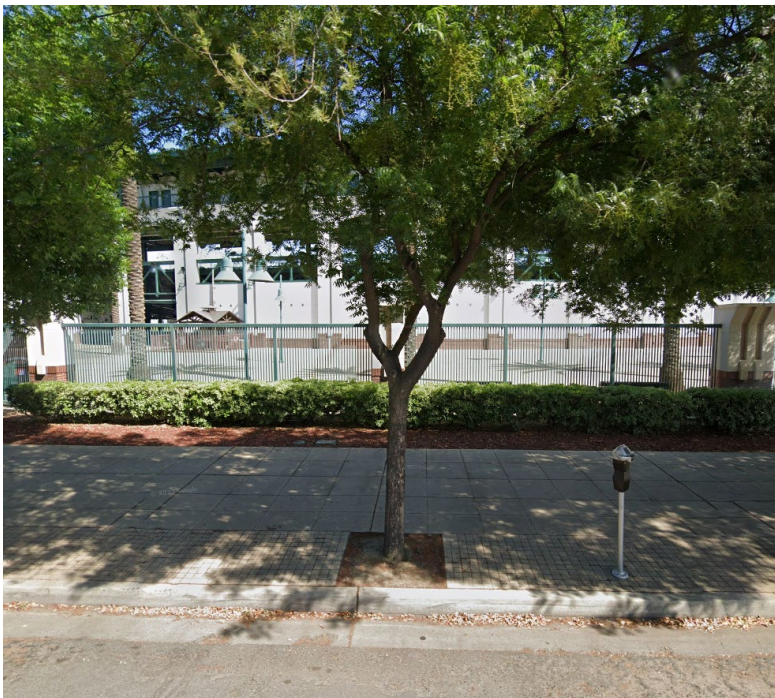
*P3a. Description: (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries) This former site of the Hughes Hotel and site of Arthur Banta's Victory Cyclery shop is a parcel containing Chukchansi Park (formerly Grizzlies Stadium). The stadium is located on the southerly side of Tulare Street and easterly side of H Street facing the corner H Street and Tulare Street. The Stadium occupies the former right of way of Broadway Street (Formerly I Street). The stadium is a modern three story municipal stadium, with exposed metal beams, stucco cladding, and arched openings, and is set back from the street on a concrete foundation with a below grade baseball diamond consisting of modern turf. For the notation of this historic resource location, the precise location which is 53.3 feet from the Tulare Street centerline and 238.3 feet from the H Street Centerline in the landscape bedding directly north of the stadium perimeter fencing is the subject of this record.

*P3b. Resource Attributes: HP42 Stadium, HP5 Hotel (Former Site), HP39 Other

*P4. Resources Present: ☐ Building ☐ Structure ☐ Object ☒ Site ☐ District ☐ Element of District ☐ Other (Isolates, etc.)

Date of Photo: March 2024

P5a. Photograph or Drawing (Photograph required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



*P6. Date Constructed/Age and Source: 1887, Fresno County: The Pioneer Years, ISBN 0-914330-70-5

☒ Historic ☐ Prehistoric
☐ Both

*P7. Owner and Address:

City of Fresno
2600 Fresno Street, Fresno, CA 93721

*P8. Recorded by: (Name, affiliation, and address) James W. Sponsler, PMP, CAPM Historic Preservation Commission, 330 N. Park Ave, Fresno, CA 93701

*P9. Date Recorded: 19 March 2024

*P10. Survey Type: Intensive

*P11. Report Citation: (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.")
Historic Review of 1830 Tulare Street, for Fresno's Local Register of Historic Resources

*Attachments: ☐ NONE ☒ Location Map ☒ Continuation Sheet ☒ Building, Structure, and Object Record
☐ Archaeological Record ☐ District Record ☐ Linear Feature Record ☐ Milling Station Record ☐ Rock Art Record
☐ Artifact Record ☐ Photograph Record ☐ Other (List):

BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Fresno & San Francisco Bicycle Mail Route *NRHP Status Code 5S1
Page _____ of _____

B1. Historic Name: Hughes Hotel, Victor Cyclery
B2. Common Name: Chukchansi Park
B3. Original Use: Hotel, Commercial Building B4. Present Use: Stadium
*B5. Architectural Style: N/A

*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)

Circa 1887 - Construction of Hughes Hotel

June 10, 1953 - Arson resulting in total loss and demolition of Hughes Hotel

August 8, 2000 - Groundbreaking of Grizzlies Stadium (Chukchansi Park)

*B7. Moved? ☐ No ☒ Yes ☐ Unknown Date: June 10, 1953 Original Location: 1830 Tulare Street

*B8. Related Features: This APN is also the site of the Traveler's Hotel which although today part of the same parcel was not originally connected to the Hughes Hotel, Thomas Hughes, Arthur Banta, or Victor Cyclery

B9a. Architect: Unknown b. Builder: Thomas Hughes
*B10. Significance: Theme organized labor, railroad Area Downtown Fresno
Period of Significance June 1894-July 1894 Property Type N/A Applicable Criteria (i)
local (i, ii) CA POHI (Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)
(Continued)

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes)

*B12. References: Farrell, Mike The Mike Farrell Collection. Via Web. Accessed December 8, 2023.

https://www.pennypost.org/pdf/farrell/BicycleMail_FarrellCollection.pdf; Cooper, Lowell B. *The Fresno and San Francisco Bicycle Mail of 1894*. Published 1982. Leonard H. Hartmann. Philatelic Bibliopole. ISBN 0-917528-05-0; WorthPoint Corporation. Accessed December 8, 2023.

<https://www.worthpoint.com/worthopedia/1935-san-francisco-fresno-bicycle-1826451958>; Hughes Hotel Image: ca. 1890, San Joaquin Valley Library System. Via Web. Accessed December 11, 2023. <https://calisphere.org/item/ark:/13030/kt7f59q4rc/>; 1898 Sanborn Fire Maps, Fresno Ca, Library of Congress, Page 6; 1906 Sanborn Fire Maps, Fresno Ca, Library of Congress, Page 45; Provost, Stephen H. *Fresno Growing Up: A City Comes of Age: 1945-1985*. Pg 25, Published 2015. Stephen H. Provost. Craven Street Books. ISBN- 978-1-61035-252-5; Clough, Charles W. Seacrest, William B. Jr. *Fresno County: The Pioneer Years - From the Beginnings to 1900*. Pg 307, Published 1984. Charles W Clough and William B Seacrest Jr. Panorama West Books. ISBN 0-914330-70-5.

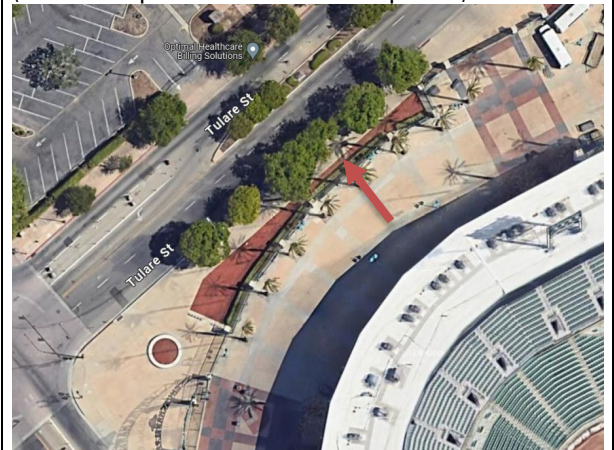
B13. Remarks:

This site is for the starting location of the Fresno and San Francisco Bike Mail Route, an event that lasted for 14 days to transport mail from inland California to San Francisco as a result of the national Pullman Strike occurring at the time.

*B14. Evaluator: James W. Sponsler PMP, CAPM 330
N. Park Avenue, Fresno, CA 93701
*Date of Evaluation: 19 March 2024

(This space reserved for official comments.)

(Sketch Map with north arrow required.)



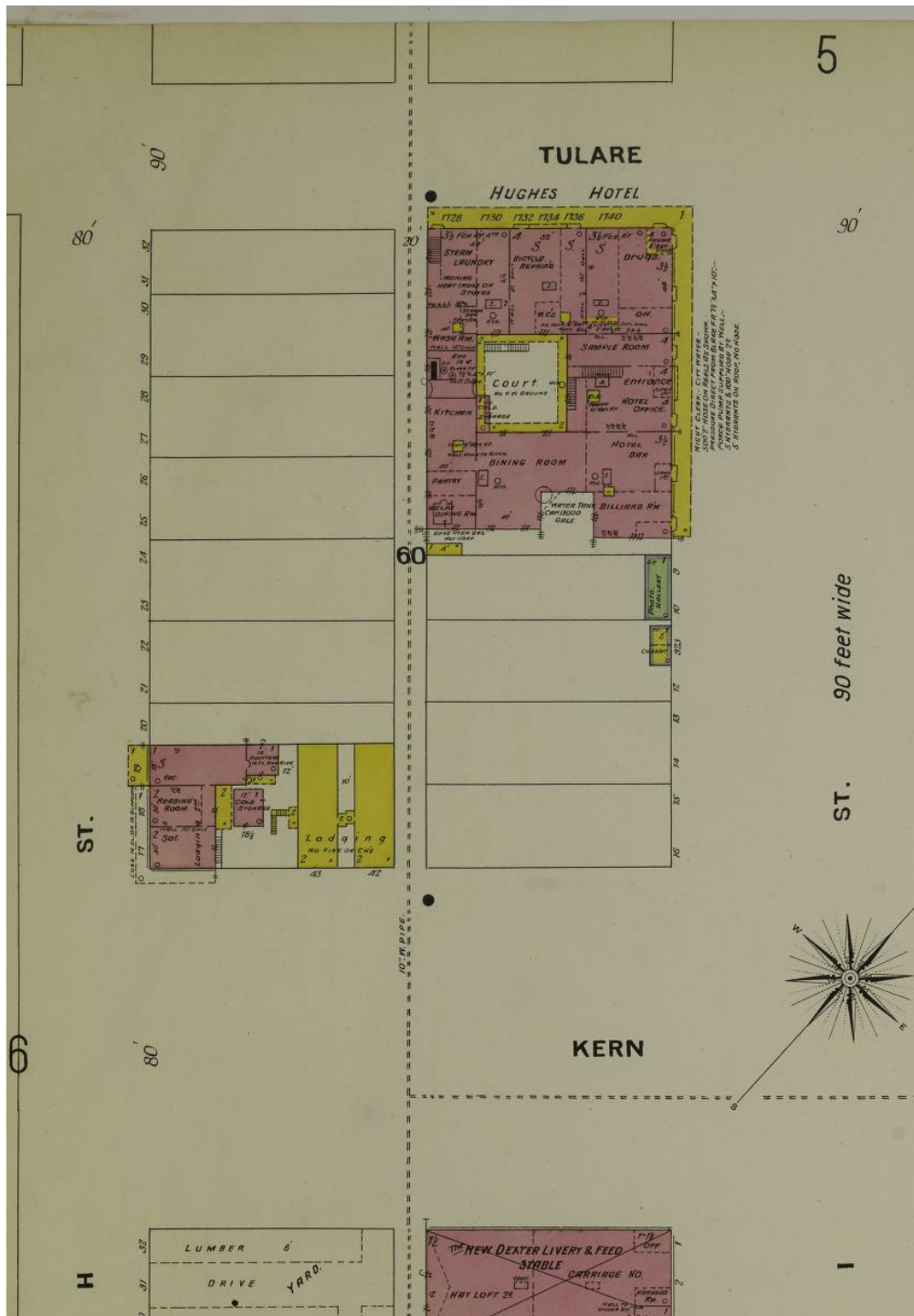
North

State of California - The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
LOCATION MAP

Primary #
HRI#
Trinomial

Page 3 of 7 *Resource Name or # Fresno and San Francisco Bicycle Mail Route

*Map Name: Sanborn Fire Maps 1898, 1906 *Scale: _____ *Date of map: 1898, 1906



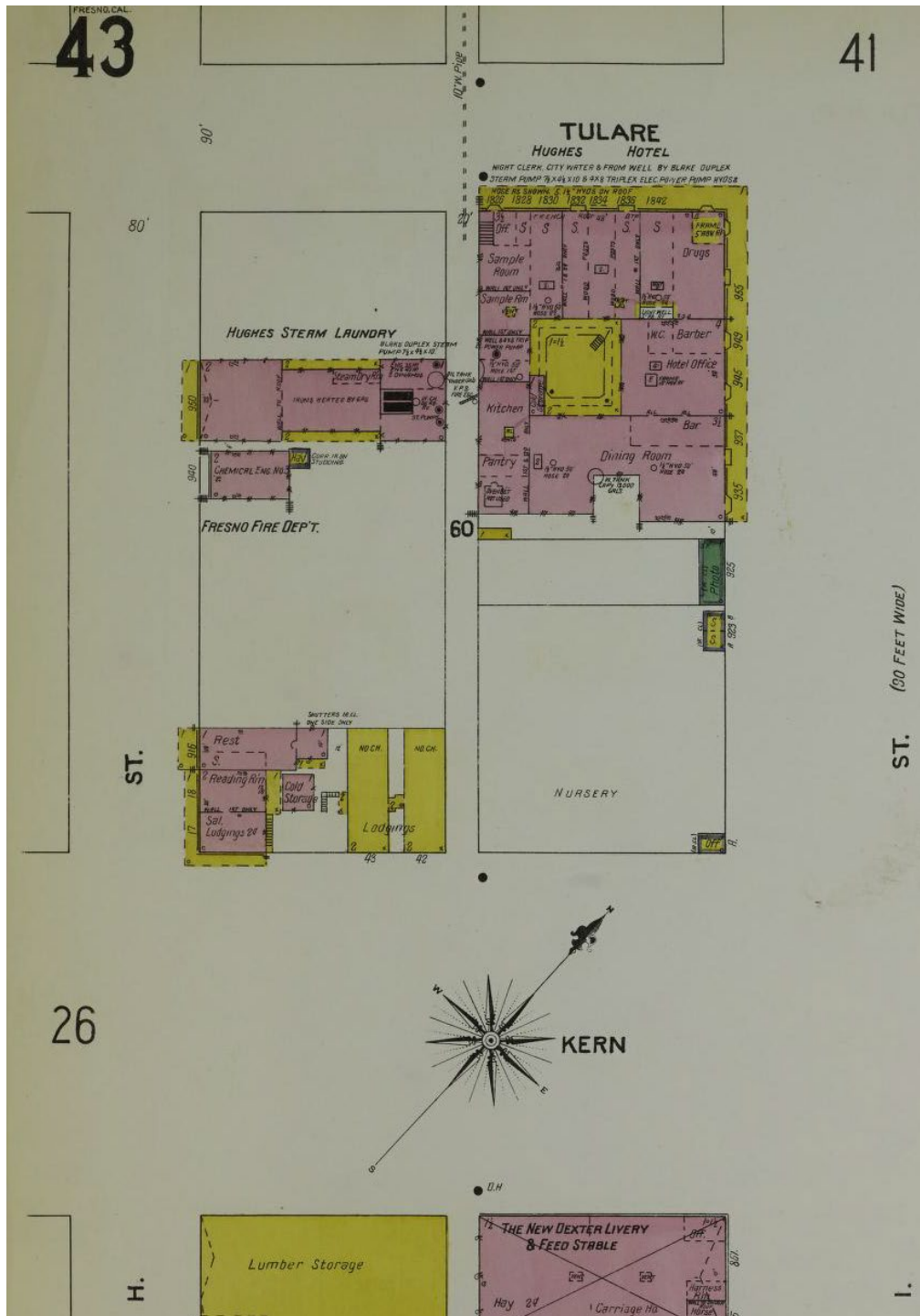
1898 Sanborn Fire Map

State of California - The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
LOCATION MAP

Primary #
HRI#
Trinomial

Page 4 of 7 *Resource Name or # Fresno and San Francisco Bicycle Mail Route

*Map Name: Sanborn Fire Maps 1898, 1906 *Scale: _____ *Date of map: 1898, 1906



1906 Sanborn Fire Map

CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: Fresno and San Francisco Bicycle Mail Route

Page 5 of 7

***Resource Name or #** Fresno and San Francisco Bicycle Mail Route

***Recorded by:** James W. Sponsler, PMP, CAPM ***Date:** 19 March 2024 ☒ Continuation

The Fresno and San Francisco Bike Mail Route commenced service out of necessity. On May 11, 1894, the Pullman Railcar Strike began near Chicago. This strike was due to a reduction in pay for workers and an increase in living costs at the Pullman Company town. Workers walked off the Pullman Palace Car Works production lines at the actions of George Pullman. During the ensuing weeks that the strike continued, other railway workers became more sympathetic to the Pullman employees.

The strike would grow culminating on June 26, 1894, with the addition of more rail operators which were part of the American Railway Union (ARU) began striking in solidarity with the Pullman Strikers bringing most of the United States rail traffic to a halt including the Post Office Department as part of a nationwide boycott of Pullman Car usage commenced.

The strike after June 26, 1894, brought all rail traffic into the interior of California including the City of Fresno to a stop. This included all letters, documents, and packages destined for or out of Fresno essentially cutting off all communications between Fresno and the rest of the state, and country. To place this in context, Fresno in 1894 had only the Southern Pacific Railroad serving the city as the San Francisco and San Joaquin Railroad (today now the BNSF Railway) would not be built until 1896.

Arthur C. Banta (1869-1945), the owner of Victor Cyclery located at 1730 Tulare St. (today the corrected address would be 1830 Tulare St.), saw the need to reestablish a link to the Bay Area which would allow communication and shipping between Fresno and the rest of the United States. From San Francisco, Fresno and the Valley could communicate with the eastern US via mail. Banta began on July 1, 1894 to plan routes, recruiting bicycle riders, making advertising, and planning to attract usage of the emergency mail service via a bicycle mail route. Having a contact in San Francisco with the Overman Wheel Company, another bicycle shop, Banta set prices at 25 cents a letter compared to the normal 2 cents under normal conditions. The primary location for mail collection would be the cyclery office with additional collection in the towns of Selma and Fowler. The Fresno and San Francisco Bicycle Mail Route was broken into 8 segments to allow for a fresh cyclist in increments.

Segment 1: Fresno to 20-mile House (present day 20500 W Whitesbridge Rd.) 21.7 miles

Segment 2: 20-mile House to Firebaugh 21.6 miles

Segment 3: Firebaugh to Los Banos 30.5 miles

Segment 4: Los Banos to foot of mountains 6 miles beyond St. Louis Ranch (present day San Luis Reservoir) 19.5 miles

Segment 5: Foot of mountain over Pacheco Pass to Bell Station 9.5 miles

Segment 6: Bell Station to Madrone (present day Morgan Hill) 32.6 miles

Segment 7: Madrone to Menlo Park 41.5 miles

CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: _____ Fresno and San Francisco Bicycle Mail Route _____

Page 6 of 7

***Resource Name or #** Fresno and San Francisco Bicycle Mail Route

***Recorded by:** James W. Sponsler, PMP, CAPM ***Date:** 19 March 2024 ☒ Continuation

Segment 8: Menlo Park to San Francisco (Larkin & McAllister Sts.) 32.5 miles

Banta, along with an engraver named Eugene Donze, created and engraved stamps that were affixed to letters and packages bound on the route. The first die engraving is noted as having a spelling error in stating this as the "Fresno and San Fransisco Bicycle Mail Route." Subsequent engravings corrected the extra "s" back to the "c" in San Francisco.

The first mail delivery left Fresno on July 7th, 1894, at 4:30am and arrived in San Francisco at 10:30pm covering 210 miles on bicycle in 18 hours. The fastest ride was noted as taking under 16 hours or traveling an average speed of 13 mph over wagon trails. The last mail run would take place July 21st, 1894, as the Pullman Strike had ended.

The significance of this event is both the ingenuity and undertaking of professionally moving mail over land by bicycle and the distance traveled to do so. Other bicycle mail routes or bicycle newspaper routes existed at the time however these were sporadic, short distance, and did not include a means of stamping to ensure paid postage. The event is also noted significantly in the philatelic community of stamp collecting due to the limited amount of stamps produced and that the Fresno and San Francisco Bicycle Mail Route is one of a limited amount of independent postage stamps that legally reside outside of the United States Postal Service.

In conclusion, the starting location of the Fresno and San Francisco Bicycle Mail Route appears eligible to Fresno's Local Register of Historic Resources under Criterion (i) for its association with events that made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. While the building is no longer standing, the event that happened at that location is significant.

CONTINUATION SHEET

Property Name: Fresno and San Francisco Bicycle Mail Route

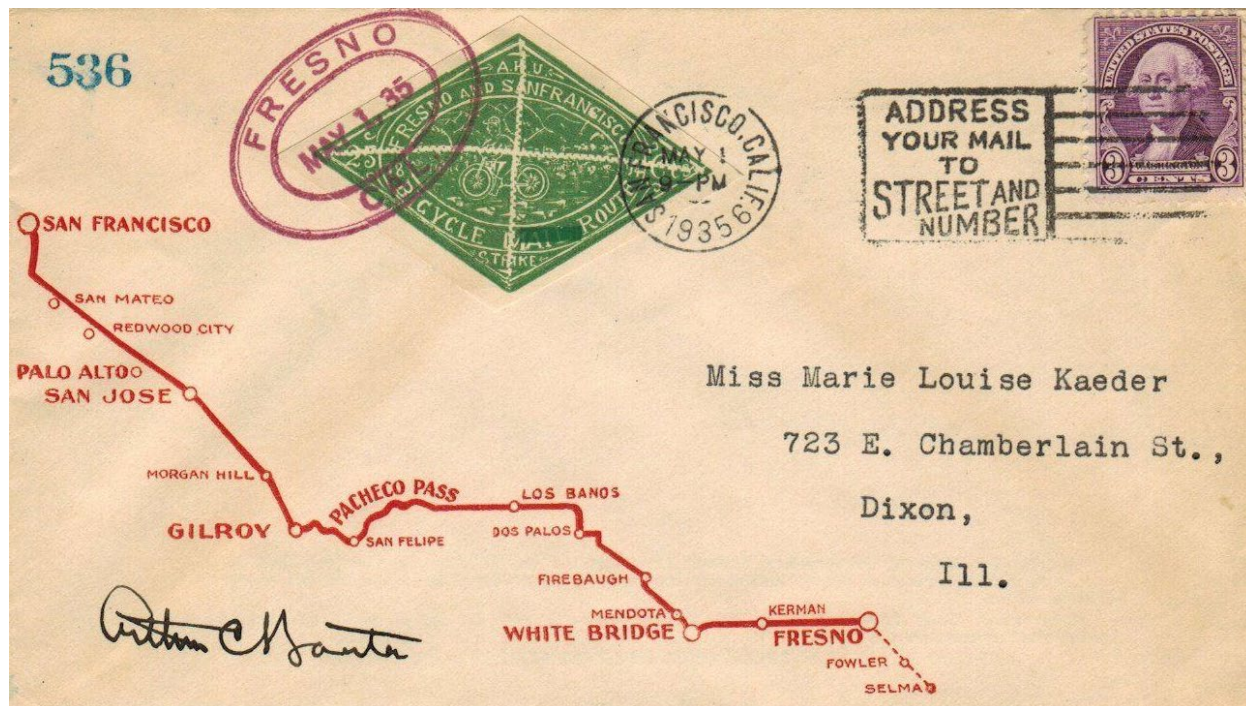
Page 7 of 7

*Resource Name or # Fresno and San Francisco Bicycle Mail Route

*Recorded by: James W. Sponsler, PMP, CAPM

*Date: 19 March 2024

☒ Continuation



Envelope outlining bicycle route from Fresno to San Francisco. Reproduction created by Arthur Banta to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the event.

Source: WorthPoint Corporation. Accessed December 8, 2023.

<https://www.worthpoint.com/worthopedia/1935-san-francisco-fresno-bicycle-1826451958>