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AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT OF ROAN CREEK TOLL ROAD (5ME924) AND ASSOCIATED SITES IN MESA COUNTY, COLORADO

BLM Reference No. 15816-01
OAHP Reference No. ME.LM.R935
SHF Project No. 16-AS-004

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Submitted to

COLORADO HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
1200 Broadway
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Abstract

Dominquez Archaeological Research Group (DARG), by means of a grant from the Colorado State Historical Fund (16-AS-004), conducted a site assessment of the Roan Creek Toll Road site (5ME924), located in DeBeque Canyon for the Bureau of Land Management Grand Junction Field Office (BLM GJFO). Fieldwork was conducted from May 5 to July 20, 2016 under BLM Antiquities Permit No. C-67009. Carl Conner served as Principal Investigator and Nicole (Darnell) Inman served as Project Director.

Overall, the project recorded 2.5 miles of toll road. Two segments (5ME924.8 and 5ME924.9) were documented; however, each of those are comprised of non-contiguous roadway structures. Within those two segments, non extant portions have either been obliterated by railroad construction or the passage of time. Private lands, which were not examined, are located between the two segments. In addition to the toll road segments, related sites were also recorded. These included two previously recorded sites: a homestead (5ME931) and 3 new segments of transmission line (5ME16695), and a newly recorded large historic sheltered camp (5ME21641).

The Roan Creek Toll Road (5ME924), homestead (5ME931), and sheltered camp (5ME21641) are field evaluated as eligible for listing on the National Register for Historic Places (NRHP). The transmission line (5ME16695) is field evaluated as need data before a determination of eligibility can be made. Protection and preservation are recommended for all of the sites.

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INTRODUCTION

Dominquez Archaeological Research Group (DARG), by means of a grant from the Colorado State Historical Fund (16-AS-004), conducted a site assessment of the Roan Creek Toll Road site (5ME924), located in DeBeque Canyon for the Bureau of Land Management Grand Junction Field Office (BLM GJFO). Fieldwork was conducted from May 5 to July 20, 2016 by Nicole (Darnell) Inman, Project Director, and Carl E. Conner, Principal Investigator. Courtney Groff, Lucas Piontkowski, Inman and Conner carried out the field work. Natalie Higginson and Jacquelyn Brand assisted with report preparation. All work was performed under BLM Cultural Resource Use Permit C-67009. Funding was providing through a History Colorado State Historical Fund Archaeological Assessment Grant (2016-AS-004).

The project was undertaken as part of DARG's ongoing research into the identification and protection of fragile, non-renewable evidences of human activity, occupation and endeavor as reflected in districts, sites, structures, artifacts, objects, ruins, works of art, architecture, and natural features that were of importance to human events. The site documentation and basic data retrieval for this project were performed according to guidelines set forth by the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological Documentation (48 CFR 44734-37) and by the History Colorado Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (OAHP).

LOCATION

The project area is located within DeBeque Canyon in Mesa County, Colorado on the west side of the Colorado River. The toll road segments recorded with this project are located within Township 9 South, Range 97 West, Sections 19, 30, and 31; Township 10 South, Range 97 West, Sections 6 and 7; and Township 10 South, Range 98 West, Section 12; 6th P.M. (Figure 1).

ENVIRONMENT

The project area is within the Piceance Creek Basin, one of the major geologic subdivisions of Colorado, and one of six major physiographic divisions of the Colorado Plateau Province (Hunt 1974: 429). The Piceance Creek Basin is an elongate structural downwarp of the Colorado Plateau province that apparently began its subsidence approximately 70 million years ago during the Laramide Orogeny. Sediments from surrounding highlands were deposited in the basin, accumulating to a thickness of as much as 9000 feet by the lower Eocene epoch, when subsidence ceased. Regional uplift occurred in the Late Tertiary, and erosion of the area has continued since (Young and Young 1977:43-46).

During the Paleozoic Era, the Basin was located on a stable basaltic block and no

major orogenic events occurred during that time (Adams and Kirr 1980: 3.4). The Paleozoic formations are covered by two miles of Mesozoic and Tertiary formations that result in the north sloping Roan Cliffs. The Cretaceous formations rising from under the Tertiary formations form the Book Cliffs (Hunt 1974: 439). Structural deformation within the Basin consists of northwest trending faulting and folding. Sedimentary deposition rests upon schist and gneiss Precambrian rock and occurred from Late Precambrian time to the present. Those of shales, sandstones and conglomerates occurred during the Tertiary Age and are apparent in the canyons. Sedimentary rocks in the canyons are composed primarily of sandstone and shale from the Hunter Canyon Formation (Cretaceous). Erosion of these deposits has resulted in a rugged topography cut by deep canyon systems that drain into the Colorado River.

The project area lies south of the town of DeBeque, Colorado, on the west slopes of DeBeque Canyon. Geology is Hunter Canyon Formation and consists of massive brown-buff and gray sandstone and soft gray shale beds. The overlying unit is a chert pebble conglomerate or conglomeratic sandstone. Sandstone makes up about 60 percent of the formation, the remainder being gray shale with some thin sandstone layers. Carbonaceous shale layers constitute only about 1 percent. The sandstone beds are medium to coarse grained and in beds 10-40 feet thick but locally aggregating as much as 300 feet. The bedding is generally regular, but even thick beds may finger into shale abruptly. Crossbedding is common, and channeling fairly common. The basalt parts of many beds are characterized by accumulations of mud pellets and lumps ranging in longest dimension from 1/4 to 4 inches. Gray and greenish-gray shale and sandy shale are abundant. They contain thin calcareous sandy layers and some concretions. Fossils are rare (Fisher, Erdmann, and Reeside, Jr. 1960:20).

Soils are Torriorthents, warm-Rock outcrop complex. The unit is about 50 percent Torriorthents and 40 percent Rock outcrop. Included are areas of Badlands, which make up about 10 percent of the total unit. Torriorthents are generally very shallow to deep over hard or soft bedrock. These soils are well drained to somewhat excessively drained. They formed in residuum and colluvium derived from sandstone, shale, limestone, or siltstone. A common profile in the survey area has a surface layer of pale brown channery loam about 2 inches thick. The underlying material is very channery loam about 11 inches thick. Sandstone is at a depth of about 13 inches. In some areas the surface layer is stony or flaggy. Depth to shale or sandstone is 4 to 60 inches. The soils are calcareous throughout. Rock outcrop consists of barren escarpments, ridge caps, and rocky points of sandstone, shale, limestone, or siltstone. The escarpments commonly are 3 to 50 feet high and 25 to 2,500 feet long (Alstatt 2000:72-73).

Elevations range from 4760 to 5040 feet, which occurs within the Upper Sonoran vegetation zone. Two vegetation communities are present within the project area: sagebrush/ grasslands and saltbrush shrublands habitat, and riparian habitat.

The sagebrush/grassland community covers large portions of the project area and

merges with greasewood and saltbush toward the river. Sagebrush can support a variety of grasses and herbaceous species, but here the community has been reduced to sagebrush, prickly pear cactus, and cheatgrass. Other species present are galleta, Indian ricegrass, needleandthread, gilia, larkspur, and wild four o'clock.

The riparian habitat occurs as a well developed community along the Colorado River and in small, localized pockets in spring fed drainages. Cottonwood, box elder, tamarisk, willow, skunkbush, rabbitbrush, and greasewood are present, as well as reed grass, sedges, rushes, and cattail. Besides offering a plethora of floral resources, the riparian habitat attracts animals seeking food, water, and cover.

Ground visibility was 75-100% within the sagebrush/grassland and 20-50% in riparian areas. These communities support a variety of wildlife species although the present day land use of the project area (including energy development, grazing, ranching and farming) has pushed most large mammals into the surrounding mountains. There, mule deer, elk, coyote, and black bear are common, as are cottontail rabbits, beavers, and various rodents. Mountain lion, bobcat, fox, skunk, badger, and weasel are also likely inhabitants. Bird species observed in the area include the jay, raven, red-shafted flicker, long-eared owl, and various raptors.

These relatively low elevations are host to a cool semiarid climate where temperatures can drop to -10 degrees F during the winters and summer temperatures may reach 100 degrees F; there is a maximum of 140 frost free days and the annual precipitation is about 10 inches. The surrounding higher elevations are characterized as cooler and moister. Annually, the high mountain temperatures could average 5 degrees cooler and the precipitation as much as 14 inches greater that the surrounding low elevations (USDA SCS 1978:244).

CULTURAL HISTORY

Cultural resource investigations in the vicinity of the project area have yielded surface diagnostic artifacts and excavated cultural materials consistent with Paleoindian, Archaic, Formative, and Protohistoric occupations. The material culture for these time periods has been extensively documented in *Colorado Prehistory: A Context for the Northern Colorado River Basin* (Reed and Metcalf 1999) and in Class I Cultural Resource Inventory for Grand Junction Field Office of the Bureau of Land Management (Conner et al. 2011). Since this report is historic in nature, these cultural eras will be excluded from this discussion. The reader is encouraged to explore the referenced documents for more information. Historic overviews and records indicate occupation by various bands of the Ute Tribe and by EuroAmerican settlers, miners, railway workers, and ranchers. A history of this region is provided in *The Valley of Opportunity: A History of West-Central Colorado* (Mehls 1988), *Colorado History: A Context for Historical Archaeology* (Church et al. 2007) and in the aforementioned Class I (Conner et al. 2011). The following provides relevant historical background pertaining to the area considered by this project.

Settlement

It has been well documented that the Ute people occupied large areas of western Colorado until they were officially removed on 1 September 1881 as the result of the Treaty of 1880. The treaty stipulated that the White River bands were to go to the Uintah Reservation in northeastern Utah and the Uncompahgre band was to be given a small reservation in the vicinity of the confluence of the Colorado and Gunnison Rivers. Aware of the value of these agricultural lands; however, the commission charged with enforcing the terms of the treaty, under the direction of Otto Mears, manipulated the location process using a loophole in the treaty language, and the Uncompahgre bands were give lands in Utah near the Uintah Reservation. The Southern Ute bands remained on their small reservation in southwestern Colorado as a result of the Treaty of 1873. Unofficially, many Utes remained in hiding in their homeland and many others returned each year to hunt; however, with the dissolution of the treaties that previously set up reservation lands for the White River and Uncompahgre bands in western Colorado, most of the Western Slope was opened for EuroAmerican settlement.

Interest in the potential agricultural lands along the Uncompahgre, Gunnison, Colorado, Dolores, San Miguel, White, and La Plata River valleys of western Colorado had been growing for some time prior to the Utes' banishment. By the spring of 1881 the frontier towns closest to the Ute lands were "crowded with people, anxious to enter the Reservation and take possession of the most desirable locations" (Haskell 1886:2). Only days after the Utes had been expelled, settlers began rushing onto the old reservation lands. During the autumn months of 1881, settlement activity spread quickly - land claims were staked, townsites were chosen, and railroad routes were surveyed (Haskell 1886, Borland 1952, and Rait 1932). The first year of settlement activity was marked by a degree of uncertainty regarding the legality of land claims because former reservation lands were not officially declared public lands until August 1882. When finally announced, the 1882 declaration did not allow homestead entries but only preemptions, or cash entries, at the rate of $1.25 per acre for agricultural land and $5.00 per acre for mineral land (Borland 1952:75). By 1895, the majority of the former Ute lands had been claimed, mostly under Cash Entry patents.

The settlers raised their own food and availed themselves to the plentiful game in the area. Gardens, hay fields, and orchards were planted, and irrigation ditches were dug to divert creek water to cultivated fields. Large herds of cattle and sheep were accumulating, grazing the valley floor and the vast open ranges of the Roan Plateau, Grand Mesa, and Uncompahgre Plateau, driven to the uplands via trails up the various gulches and canyons.

Several town sites were established in the Grand Valley shortly after the area was opened for settlement. In 1881, three parties of men led by O.D. Russell, J. Clayton Nichols, and William McGinley followed the Gunnison River north to the Colorado River (known then as the Grand) staking claims at the junction. At the same time, J.S. Gordon, William Green, and Mr. Forbush made their way east into the Grand Valley. Additionally, George A. Crawford, R.D. Mobley, M. Rush Warner, Colonel Morris, and S.W. Harper also made their

way north from the Gunnison area as soon as the Ute were removed. In the fall of 1881, Crawford filed paperwork to incorporate the town of Grand Junction. His town plan included parks, schools, churches, and government buildings. Half of the funding for his town plan came from selling stock to the Denver and Rio Grande Junction Railway (McCreanor 1986:1).

Palisade, Colorado was founded by farmers and orchardists, such as John P. Harlow, Colonel Christopher Columbus Bower, and William and S.E. Oldham. Harlow, ranching on Rapid Creek, first tested the soil capabilities of the upper valley in 1882 with garden vegetables. The town was founded in 1895 and incorporated in 1904 (ibid:8). It is best known for its fruit production, particularly peaches. The cliffs surrounding the area conserve heat and funnel air, creating temperatures that are 3-5 degrees warmer than the surrounding area. This microenvironment is ideal for fruit trees and other produce.

At the north end of DeBeque Canyon is the town of De Beque. The town, incorporated in 1890, is located at the mouth of Roan Creek. Robert Eaton, L.T. Stewart, and George Gibson filed homesteads and water rights claims on Roan Creek in 1882. J.C. Crotty and John Larkin established claims in the Bluestone area on the south side of the Colorado River, which was later developed by Judge Joseph E. Ong. In 1884, Dr. Wallace A.E. de Beque and companions Fred Webster, John Bouldin, and Dick Smith, traveled over the Bookcliffs to the head of present-day DeBeque Canyon. There Dr. de Beque staked a homestead and named it Ravensbeque. The doctor brought his wife, Marie Bonholzer, to his log cabin and in 1885 the area's first post office opened in his home (ibid:9).

The Denver and Rio Grande railroad from Gunnison to Grand Junction was completed in 1882. This left the residents north of Grand Junction isolated. Early attempts to construct a road along the Grand River were unsuccessful. Alternate routes were found. Settlers north of the river traveled from Roan Creek, along the back side of the Bookcliff Mountains to the head of Salt Wash near present-day Fruita (Figure 2) (MacKendrick 1987, Silbernagel 2015). Those on the south side accessed the Grand Valley using Rapid Creek.

Roan Creek Toll Road

Henry Rhone, a lawyer from Illinois, came to Grand Junction in 1882. In the spring of 1884, Mr. Rhone was appointed City Attorney. He resigned the position soon afterward to devote his time to the construction of the Roan Creek Toll Road. It was viewed as one of the greatest and most beneficial projects carried out in the county. Mr. Rhone is credited with seeing the project through, being backed up only by his persistent energy and shrewd business ability (Haskell 1886:56).

The Trust Deed reads as follows: The Roan Creek Toll Road, a wagon road, situate, lying and being in the said county and state which commences at a point on the County road near the Grand River, about ten and one half miles east of the Town of Grand Junction, and runs thence in a northeasterly direction on the north side of the Grand river, through the

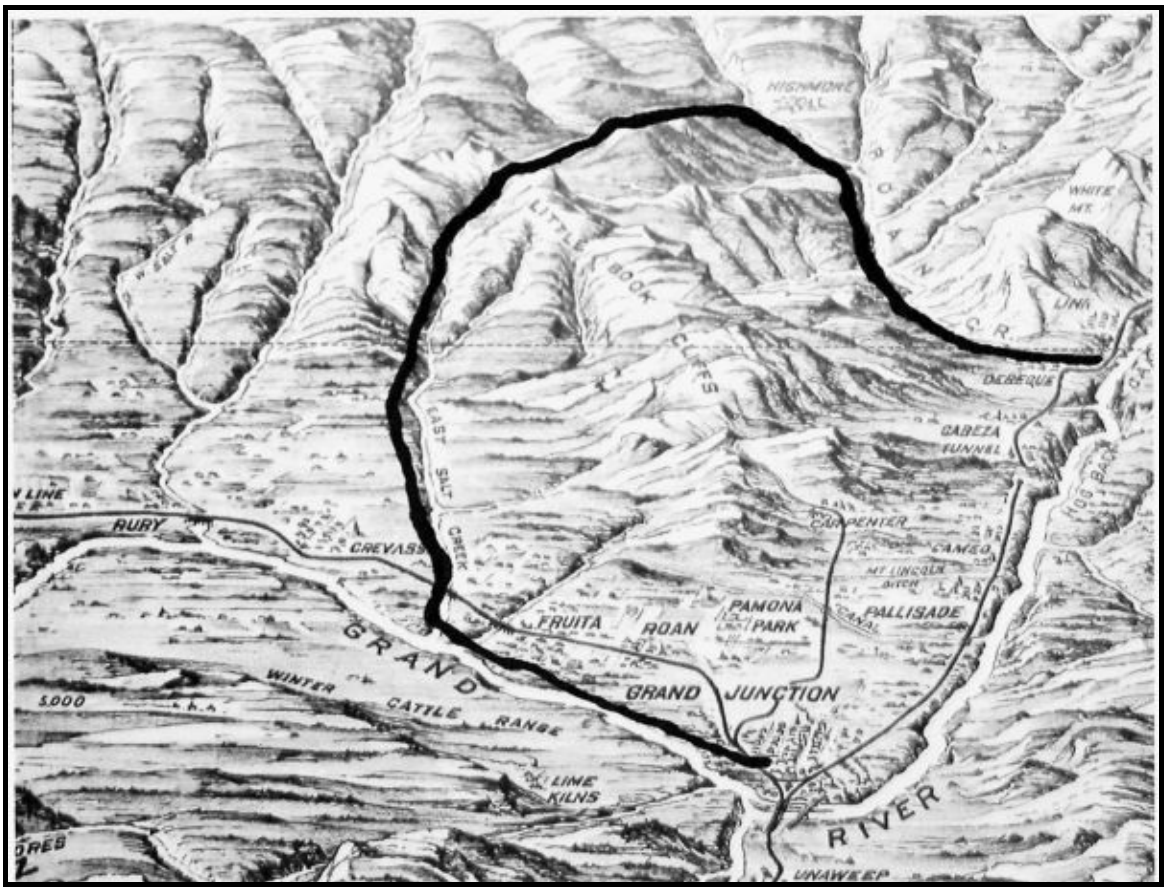

Figure 2 Approximated wagon route illustrated on an 1894 school map. This route was used before Roan Creek Toll Road was constructed (Silbernagel 2015; Pezolt 1894).

"Hogback Canyon" along the north bank of the said Grand river to the Garfield County line; the said road as thus described being about thirty (30) miles in length; it being more fully described in the Articles of Incorporation (Rhone 1884) .

Articles of Incorporation, 26th day of August A.D. 1884.

Article 1. The name of the said company shall be "The Roan Creek Toll Road Company."

Article 2. The object for which such company is created is to build and operate a Toll Road under and by virtue of the lands of the State of Colorado, which shall commence at or near the headgate of the Grand River Ditch in the said Mesa County and State of Colorado and running thence by the most direct and feasible route to the mouth of Hogback Canon and thence up the said Canon on the north side of the Grand River by the most feasible and direct route to a point at or near the mouth of Roan Creek, in said County of Mesa and thence, continuing up the said Grand River by the most direct and feasible route to the County line between

Mesa and Garfield County in said State. The length of said road shall be about thirty miles.

Article 3. The term of existence of the said Company shall be twenty years.

Article 4. The capital stock of the said company shall be One Hundred Thousand Dollars, divided into Ten Thousand Shares of the par value of Ten Dollars each.

Article 5. The number of directors shall be three and the names of those who manage the affairs of the company the first year of its existence shall be Henry R. Rhone, Thomas Crawford, and J.W. Boulder.

Article 6. The principal office shall be kept at Grand Junction, Mesa County, Colorado and the road which this company intends to build and operate lies in this County of Mesa in said State.

Article 7. The stock of said Company shall be non-assessable.

Article 8. The director shall have power to make such prudential by laws as they may deem proper for the management of the affairs of the Company and for the purpose of carrying out the objects for which said Company was formed.

The Roan Creek Toll Road took about a year to build and cost between $12,000 and $18,000 to build (Mehls 1988:84). Attempts were made to sell shares of stock, but it did not sell well. The road was eventually financed with loans and a subscription drive that consisted of trading stock and script for cash and supplies. Workers were paid in script during early phases of construction, but a lawsuit put an end to that form of payment. Rhone continued to use script, trading one dollar of script for $0.80 in cash or goods, to acquire funds and supplies. Despite financial constraints, the road was completed in December, 1885 (MacKendrick 1987:8).

At the time, Colorado State law required that roads be at least 10 feet wide with vehicle passing turnouts, in sight of each other, every one-quarter mile. These turnouts had to be 16 feet wide and at least 50 feet long. The road grade could not exceed 15 percent. Toll road rates were as follows: a single team and wagon or stagecoach, $3.00; each saddle animal, $0.75; loose cattle, horses, and mules, $0.22½ each; and loose hogs and sheep, $0.75 each (ibid).

Rio Grande Junction Railway

By the late 1880s, it became clear that a railroad would be constructed through the canyon (Figure 3). The Denver & Rio Grande and Colorado Midland railroads struck a deal in late 1889. Both railways were trying to reach Grand Junction and the Rio Grande Western's standard gauge connection to Salt Lake. Rather than building two parallel routes, the decision was made to build one, jointly. The Rio Grande Junction Railway was constructed along the toll road right-of-way between New Castle and Grand Junction, Colorado. Construction was complete by November, 1890. Although the last Colorado Midland train ran in 1919 (Figure

3), the Rio Grande Junction was not merged into the D&RG until 1947.

The Beavertail tunnel was constructed sometime after 1890 but before 1897. A cultural resources report from this area discusses records on file at the Colorado Railroad Museum in Golden that date from March, 1901, "Tunnel - 22 miles east of Grand Junction, a siding for 61 cars with buildings" (Engles and Casey 1979). Buildings consisted of a section house, bunkhouse, car house, ice house, chicken house, and a coal house (Plate 1). The report

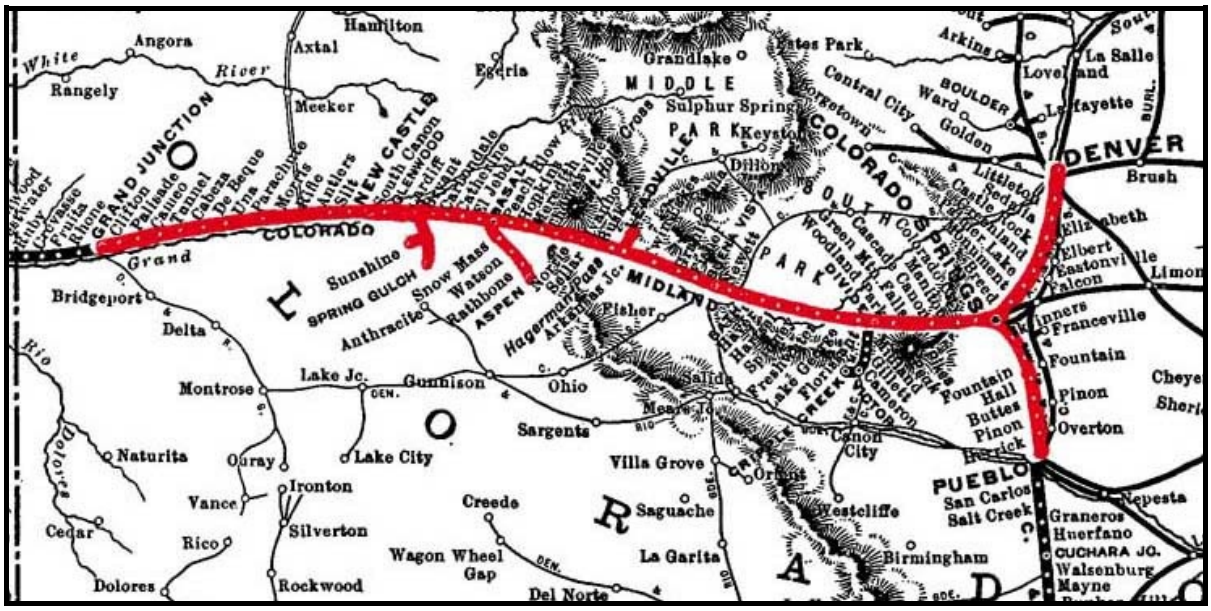

Figure 3. Colorado Midland Railway map, ca. 1900. Midland Railway shown in red.

goes on to mention other features of the railroad, including a telegraph station at Signal. It is believed that Signal was located near the east portal of the present day Beavertail Tunnel (now located on private property). Records from 1901 indicate a telegraph station was present at this time. Train orders were passed along to stations up and down the line.

Riverside is also documented at the Colorado Railroad Museum. Records do not indicate its function, or whether it was an asset of the railroad. The water tank is noted on the valuation map (Figure 4). It does not appear to be a siding or a townsite, but may have been a homestead or farm (see 5ME931).

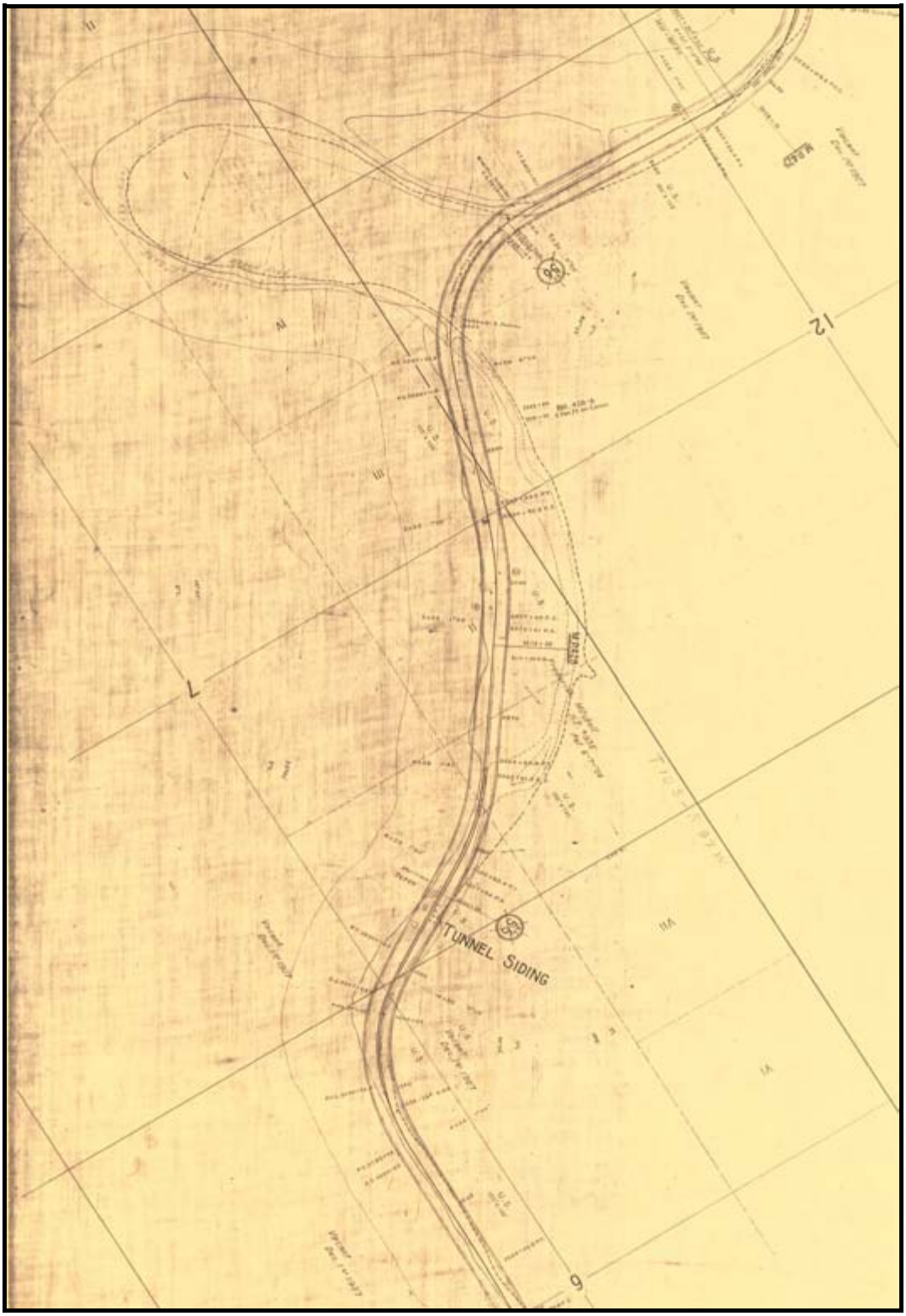

Figure 4. Rio Grande Junction Railway Right-of-Way Track Map, ca. 1919. "Old Wagon Road" is indicated as a heavy, solid, dashed line.

Plate 1. Image published in Daily Sentinel (March 12, 1958) of portions of Tunnel siding, taken sometime prior to 1916.

Water Projects

Accordingly to McCreanor in, *Mesa County, Colorado, A 100 Year History* (1986), the first ditch was the Grand Valley Ditch, constructed in 1881. It was quickly followed by the Pioneer and Pacific Slope Ditches which were constructed in 1882. After the Grand Valley Ditch was sold to new investors, it was consolidated with the Pioneer and Pacific and dubbed the Grand Valley Canal. They drew water from the Colorado River, leading many to get dysentery and other water-borne illnesses, which led to the Grand Valley's nickname, Bellyache Flats. Keifer Extension Ditch, located in the Lower Valley, utilized water from Grand Valley Canal, which was constructed in 1894.

The 1900s were also an important time for water projects. In 1905, the Grand Valley Water Users' Association was established to meet federal requirements set by the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR). The BOR opened an office in Grand Junction in 1908 and construction of the High Line Canal began soon after. A construction camp was established in Cameo and a field camp was established in Mack to begin construction on the west end. The Grand Valley Water Users' collected pledges from residents to fund the project, and the federal government matched these funds. The canal runs from the Diversion Dam near Cameo to West Salt Wash near Mack. Orchard Mesa Irrigation District formed in 1905, drawing water from Palisade. The Redlands Irrigation Company was also founded in the same year. Surrounding communities also developed water works projects, including Fruita, Kannah Creek, Plateau Valley, Rapid Creek, and Roan Creek (cf. Nicole Darnell, Chapter 7, Conner et al. 2011).

DeBeque Canyon has been the location for several large scale water projects that led to the successful settlement of Grand Junction and the surrounding area. In 1909, plans were approved to construct the High Line canal, along with the Orchard Mesa irrigation project dam (Plate 2), which was to be located 6 miles north of Palisade (just south of the railroad tunnel). According to The Palisade Tribune (February 27, 1909):

> The plans provide for a dam across the Grand river, just above Palisade, 20 feet high 50 feet wide and 400 feet long. The first six miles of the canal will involve 2,500 feet of flume and 9,000 feet of tunnels. The whole length of the canal will be 56 miles. The first actual work will probably be done on the big tunnel through Mt. Lincoln, above Palisade. A couple of smaller tunnels will be bored above the big one, aggregating about 2,000 feet. The entire time for the construction of the canal will be about five years.

Regarding the dam "The headgate will be located about six miles above Palisade (Plate 3). At the point of diversion the river will be raised 20 feet by means of a dam over 400 feet long. The canal will be taken out of the right hand or west side of the river. It will follow along the right of way of the D. & R. G. railroad for about two and one-half miles. From Cameo to Palisade the line will largely be tunnel" (*The Palisade Tribune*, February 27, 1909:1).

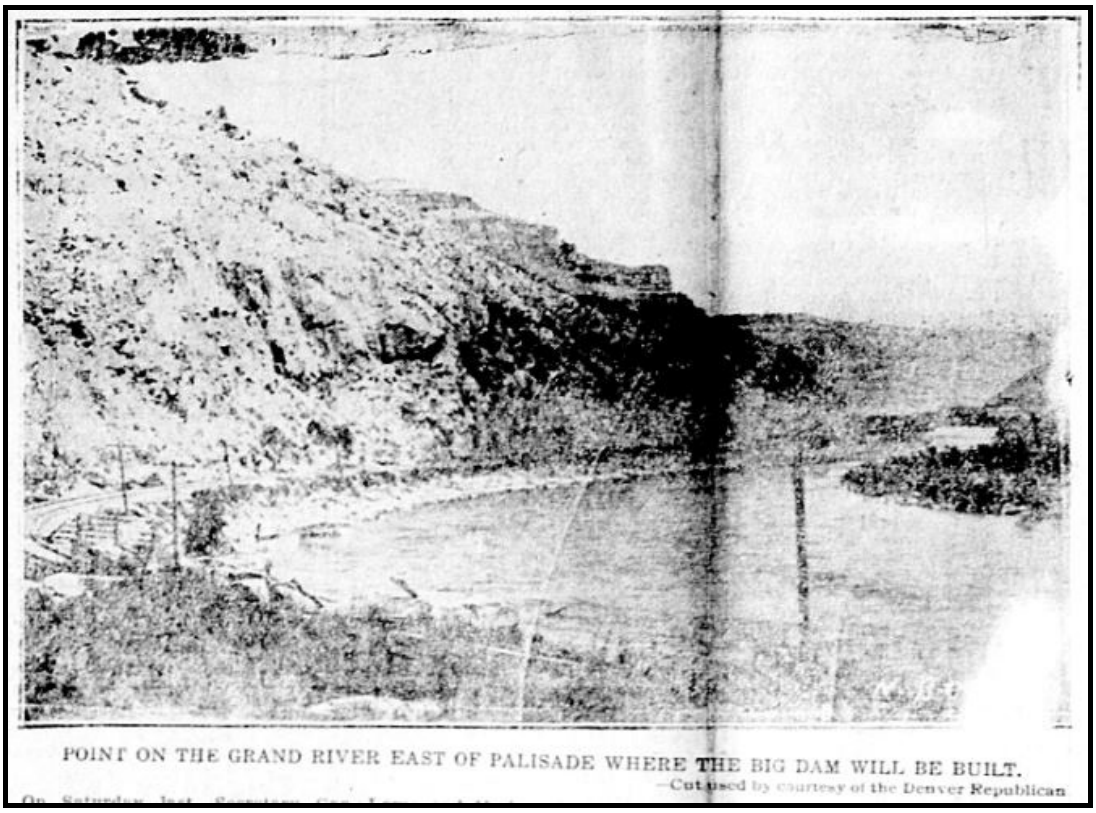
POINT ON THE GRAND RIVER EAST OF PALISADE WHERE THE BIG DAM WILL BE BUILT.
—Cut used by courtesy of the Denver Republican

Plate 2. Newspaper photograph of the proposed dam location for the Orchard Mesa project. Photo is looking downstream. (*The Palisade Tribune*, February 27, 1909:1).

Plate 3. Google Earth image of the likely location of a remaining dam abutment.

On August 15, 1913, the Plateau Voice reprinted an article from the Palisade Tribune with regard to the tunnel construction and planned roller dam (also referred to as the Government dam), which was a part of an early Bureau of Reclamation project:

> *The present camp above Cameo is a busy place and everything has been carefully arranged for a high degree of efficiency and comfort for the engineering corps, clerks, and workmen generally....Work was first started at the portal of tunnel No. 1, which is now at a depth of a little over 1,800 feet and moving along as fast as two big compressed air drills and two shifts of men per day can drive it....Later work was started on the east end of tunnel No. 2 and that is in some 500 feet....There are now 240 men employed on the tunnel work and 65 are working for the contractors on the excavating and connecting canals, while they have 130 horses and mules engaged in this work, besides a huge steam shovel which does an immense amount of excavating work....The big diversion dam is to be located about 3,000 feet below the Orchard Mesa dam.*

The dam was completed by October, 1910, "Contractor J.J. Lumsden announced the completion of the dam for the Orchard Mesa ditch early this week. The dam was a big undertaking and was built under great difficulties as the Grand River is one of the swiftest running streams in the state. It is 370 feet long and 40 feet wide, cost $100,000 and has been a year in building." The system of canals, tunnels, flumes, siphons, and laterals was completed by the end of 1917. In 1916, the Orchard Mesa Irrigation District entered into an agreement whereby the government would investigate the possibility of rebuilding the Orchard Mesa systems and supplying it with project water. It was determined that the best solution was to remove the Orchard Mesa Diversion Dam and divert all district water at the Government Dam. Water would be removed from the canal above Tunnel No. 3 and sent by siphon across the river into the existing Orchard Mesa system. Work began in 1921, with the first water being delivered in 1923. They entire project was completed in 1927 (Simonds 1994:19-20).

U.S. Federal Census

The U.S. Federal Census records were reviewed for this project. No records remain from 1890. The 1900s census was searched, but it was not possible to discern any information relating to immigrant workers. The 1910 census was more informative. Anecdotal evidence indicated that Fred Mitchell and his family resided in the vicinity of the Tunnel railroad siding. He is listed, along with railroad employees in the Palisade precinct of the census. Following the Mitchell family is another railway employee, followed by Henry Plumb. Plumb is known to have lived in the vicinity of Tunnel, likely to the east or south, which would indicate the census was moving in a southerly direction. Following Plumb are 81 ditch workers. The majority are laborers, but there was also a civil engineer, a blacksmith, a dish washer, two cooks, and two foremen. Of those, all but six were recent immigrants. Four of these were laborers, one was an engineer, and the last was a dish washer. The immigrants

were English (one cook), Spanish (one laborer), Aust-German (one laborer), Finnish (one laborer), Irish (one laborer), Swedish (one laborer), Scot-English (one foreman, one blacksmith, and one laborer), Aust-Slovenian (eight laborers), Italian (26 laborers), and Bulgarian (one foreman, one cook, and 30 laborers). It is not known where these workers were housed, but it can be assumed that they were located south of the tunnel and north of Cameo. Following the ditch workers are several other Italian railway section laborers and a foreman. It is also unknown where these workers were housed. Listed next are groups of farmers, merchants, machinists, drivers, and miners, which are attributed to the Cameo settlement. It is possible the Italian railway section laborers were also housed at Cameo.

General Land Office Records

Relevant General Land Office (GLO) survey maps (Township 9 South, Range 97 West; Township 10 South, Range 97 West; and Township 10 South, Range 98 West; 6th P.M.) were reviewed to identify any additional man made cultural features. A road is present on the west side of the Grand (Colorado) River within Township 9 South, Range 97 West (ca. 1884). No roads connect with the segment shown. A trail is also present on Township 10 South, Range 97 West (Figure 5). This particular trail loops around Beavertail Mountain and above the location of Tunnel railway siding. This trail then crosses to the east side of the river and

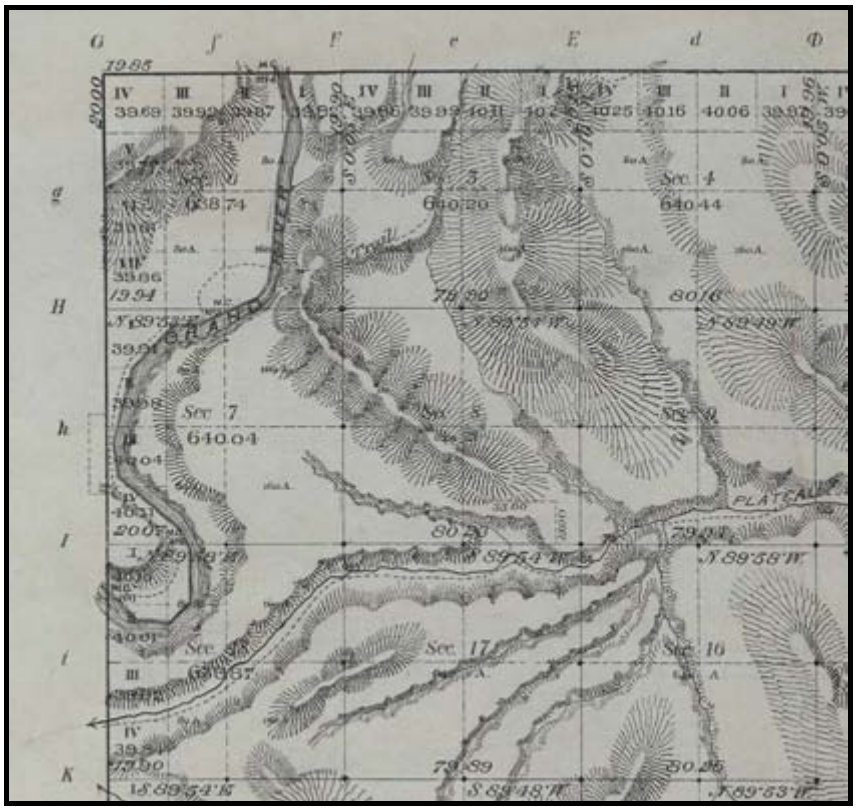

Figure 5. General Land Office map of Township 10 South, Range 97 West (ca. 1884).

continues northeast. The 1884 GLO map of Township 10 South, Range 98 West shows a trail from Plateau Creek on the east side of the river and the aforementioned trail following the west side of the river. Although these maps are dated a year before the construction of the Roan Creek Toll Road, it does show that people were utilizing the corridor on foot or horseback. GLO records and notes also reference an "old Indian trail" that followed the same general route as the toll road (Tyberg and Barclay 2008).

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Roan Creek Toll Road (5ME924) was originally documented by Maria Baldi in 1976. Its eligibility was not assessed. The resource was documented again in 1979, but no field assessment was indicated in the site record. Seven small segments, relating to individual projects, have also been recorded. The site was originally described as follows:

> *The Roan Creek toll road began use in 1885. Two stage lines, Hynes & Waller line and Hammons & Kennedy line, began using it between Grand Junction and Glenwood Springs. The toll road company was organized in 1882 promoted by Henry R. Rhone, Grand Junction financier. The right of way was sold to the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad and use of the road ceased in 1890 when the standard gauge railroad connected with Grand Junction.*
>
> *About 4 miles south of DeBeque was a toll road stop called Ravensbeque (1885). Dr. W.A.E. DeBeque was a partner in the Roan Creek Toll Road Co. and Ravensbeque was his ranch settled in 1884. The only remains of this ranch is the tombstone of a sister-in-law on a hillside above the ranch.*
>
> *The coming of the standard gauge railroad prompted DeBeque and others to organize a town at the mouth of Roan Creek. Dr. DeBeque moved his toll store, medical office and post office. The original structures were log buildings. In 1900, a frame home was built. This is still standing with modern remodelings (Baldi 1976).*

In 1979, the road was reevaluated by the Colorado Department of Highways as part of Interstate 70 construction work. At that time, the chimney structure at Tunnel railway siding was associated with the toll road. This appears to have been the beginning of a long standing belief that the chimney and foundation were associated with the toll road:

> *Today, parts of the 30-mile route are still visible. In most places, however, the railroad followed the toll road route, widening the existing roadbed. The toll road route is therefore marked by the path of the railroad.*

The Toll House, a sandstone structure now in ruins, is located on a hill east of Beavertail Mountain. It was situated so that those who used the toll road would wind up the hill to a gate where toll could easily be collected. Pieces of broken dishes and bottles fill the trash dump to the northwest of the sandstone foundation. The foundation and a chimney, complete with mantle, remind present passersby that this toll road was a vital part of the first constructed roadway in this region. The toll keepers home was well built, reflecting the pride and determination that was part of Henry R. Rhone's "idle dream" (Gambrill and Casey 1979).

No record of segment 5ME924.1 could be located. Segment 5ME924.2 was documented in 2008 by TEC, Inc. This segment of road had artifacts "sparsely scattered along the road segment as it traverses the project APE and number more than 50. No concentrations were observed. Various bottle glass shards including amethyst, aqua, cobalt blue, and milk glass, as well as patinated window glass shards were observed. Ceramic artifacts include yellow stoneware crockery fragments, white stoneware fragments, and white-glazed earthenware shards" (Tyberg and Barclay 2008). Segment 5ME924.3 was recorded in 2010 by Grand River Institute. This was a short segment with no artifacts found in association (Conner 2010). Segments 4 through 6 were recorded in 2012 by Ero Resources. Segment 4 makes mention of the "Roan Creek Toll House", however, this is confused with buildings that are known to have been constructed for the Grand Valley Diversion Dam (5ME12485). No artifacts were observed at these three segments (Croll 2012). The final segment, 5ME924.7, was recorded in 2012, also by Grand River Institute. Similar to the others, no artifacts or features were recorded (Conner 2012). All of the segment evaluations indicated that the entire road system should be field evaluated as eligible for listing on the NRHP under one or more criteria.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

The focus of this grant is the recording of the Roan Creek Toll Road. The field work survey portion of the grant addresses the need to record longer segments of the toll road, map structure features and artifacts, identify and photograph associated features and diagnostic artifacts, and metal detect as warranted. During the survey, observations were to be made to determine if the route connected with other roads and trails that may have connected other communities with this important thoroughfare. Following survey work, a search of historical records such as land title documents, road company records, railroad company records, oral histories, and gray literature was to be made for information relating to the toll road. Following survey work, potential threats to the site were to be evaluated. Finally, a full site report was to be prepared.

METHODS

An intensive site recording of the Roan Creek Toll Road and associated sites located on public lands was conducted. Data collection entailed the mapping of observed artifacts, artifact concentrations, features, and structures using a BLM certified Trimble Geo XT. Trimble data were downloaded and applied to 7.5 minute, 1:24,000-scale quadrangle maps as well as detailed site maps. Photographs were taken at each site and include overviews and views of specific artifacts and features. Descriptions of cultural manifestations, soils and vegetation were also taken. Field notes and digital photos are on file at DARG. Photographs have been included with the site forms submitted to the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation as well as the local Bureau of Land Management Grand Junction Field Office. Historic archives were consulted, including the Colorado Historic Newspaper Collection, the Museum of the West Loyd Files Research Library, the Mesa County Public Library Western History Room, and the Mesa County Clerk and Recorder.

Several sites were recorded as part of this project: two segments of toll road, (5ME924.8 and 5ME924.9); a historic homestead (5ME931); three segments of transmission line (5ME16695.2-4) and a large historic sheltered camp (5ME21641). These were all included in this report because they are either associated in some way with the toll road or their age may fall within the same period of significance as the toll road. Previously recorded segments of toll road were not reevaluated; however, some previously recorded portions have been incorporated with larger segments.

SITE DESCRIPTIONS

Site **5ME924**, the Roan Creek Toll Road, is located within DeBeque Canyon, following the west bank of the Colorado River. It originally extended from north of DeBeque to Palisade. The soils are rocky and eroded, formed from residuum and colluvium derived from sandstone, shale, limestone, or siltstone. Vegetation is sparse, consisting of grasses like Indian ricegrass, wheatgrass, and cheatgrass. Shadscale, cactus, sagebrush, rabbitbrush, serviceberry, squaw bush, and occasional juniper trees are also present. Vegetation is more dense near the river with cottonwood trees and other riparian plants.

The site was originally reported by Maria Baldi in 1976. It was described as follows, "The Roan Creek Toll road began ten miles east of Grand Junction, running in a northeasterly direction on the north side of the Colorado River, through DeBeque Canyon to the Garfield County line. It was approx. 30 miles long." The following history is excerpted from the form:

> *The Roan Creek toll road began use in 1885. Two stage lines, Hynes & Waller line and Hammons & Kennedy line, began using it between Grand Junction and Glenwood Springs. The toll road company was organized in 1882 promoted by Henry R. Rhone, Grand Junction financier. The right of*

way was sold to the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad and use of the road ceased in 1890 when the standard gauge railroad connected with Grand Junction.

About 4 miles south of DeBeque was a toll road stop called Ravensbeque (1885). Dr. W.A.E. DeBeque was a partner in the Roan Creek Toll Road Co. and Ravensbeque was his ranch settled in 1884. The only remains of this ranch is the tombstone of a sister-in-law on a hillside above the ranch.

The coming of the standard gauge railroad prompted DeBeque and others to organize a town at the mouth of Roan Creek. Dr. DeBeque moved his toll store, medical office and post office. The original structures were log buildings. In 1900, a frame home was built. This is still standing with modern remodelings (Baldi 1976).

The toll road provided residents and merchants north of Grand Junction with access goods and services. It also served to connect rural residents in outlying areas with the larger transportation network. Although relatively short-lived, the road was vital in the further development of the county (Plate 4). The road segments evaluated with this project retain the following elements of integrity: Location (portions of the constructed path are still intact and the origin and destination remain the same); Design (elements are still present that illustrate use of form, plan, space, and structure); Materials (evidence of the physical elements that were combined or deposited to form a particular pattern or configuration to form the feature remain); Workmanship (evidence of the technology of the people who constructed the feature remain); Setting (with the exception of the railroad and interstate highway system, the setting remains much as it did during the period of significance, with little in the way of modification or development); and Association (a strong association remains between the road and a pattern of events). The site lacks Feeling due to the presence of the railway and interstate highway system.

The portions of the road recorded with this project were investigated and it was determined that they should show similar character and construction methodology when compared with other documented segments. Where portions deviate from the character or method of construction, the road must demonstrate location (connecting two segments which do convey the same character). With that in mind, areas north of DeBeque were investigated and found that they lacked the same character, construction methods, materials, and association. This area has been impacted by energy development and no segments which convey clear attributes of integrity were found. The following provides the discussion and evaluation for each segment.

Plate 4. This image, which was taken prior to 1911, shows the railroad just north of Tunnel. The toll road, recorded as the southern portion of segment 5ME924.8, is still clearly present (Julia Harris Collection, Museum of the West, Loyd Files Research Library).

The current project located and recorded all extant portions of the toll road on public lands from Akin Siding to just south of Tunnel Siding (5ME924.8) and south of Beavertail railroad tunnel (5ME924.9) (Figure A-1, Appendix A.2). Non-extant portions can be attributed to erosion, rock fall, or obliteration, and areas where the railroad and the toll road truly overlap.

Segment 5ME924.8

This segment picks up at the south end of 5ME924.2 and continues south to Tunnel railroad siding. At the siding, a previously recorded segment, 5ME924.6, was incorporated into the larger segment (5ME924.8). It includes two parts, the "north" end and the "south" end. The northern segment is composed of two routes. The lower route, measuring 2245 feet (~700m) in length and approximately 10 feet (3m) in width, picks up at the south end of previously recorded segment 5ME924.2. It continues along an east facing bench to the south.

Near the midway point of the lower route, the road is not present, likely due to erosional rock fall, likely caused by a seep that has caused other erosional issues at that level. Closer to the end of the lower route is a segment that accesses an upper route, located on a larger, flat bench. Features of the lower route include a small berm, built up using local rock. No wagon ruts were apparent and erosion has impacted other portions of the segment, especially at the north end, where a seep is located. Historic rock art, the word "PRiC.K." was noted at the south end. It is located in a small alcove and was likely created using axle grease.

The upper route, measuring 2150 feet (~650m) in length and 10-15 feet (~3-4.5m) in width, does not have the same characteristics as the lower, and as such, may have been utilized to access another location. In order to prevent wagons and animals from falling off the road, the lower route utilizes berms and retaining walls to shore the sides of the trail, given the narrow width of the bench. The upper route is characterized by a depressed area that continues in a linear fashion, often against the natural fall of the landscape. The characteristic retaining wall is not present, as it was not a necessary feature. It did not appear to continue beyond what was mapped and the destination of this segment is unclear. The upper and lower segments were likely utilized during the same period of significance based on the characteristics of the short segment that connects the two. This segment, measuring 225 feet (~70m) long and about 10 feet (3m) wide, is constructed using the same construction method. A rock retaining wall forms the south edge of the road and a small bedrock cliff face forms the north edge. The route heads west up the drainage to access the upper trail. The rock wall appears to function to keep traffic slightly above and out of the drainage area. Bore holes are present in the small cliff face. The purpose of the blasting is not clear, but it is assumed that it was to create aggregate for the retaining wall and/or widening the roadway.

Between the northern segment and the southern segment, the route was searched for but not found. It is possible that the route continued downslope, off the lower bench, and merged with the current railroad right of way, but if so, it has been subject to erosion and collapse, as no features are present.

The southern end of the segment consists of portions of the roadway that join the railroad track in several places. Three segments of route are still extant. For clarity, this are noted A–C on the site map. These lengths measure, from north to south, A: 2650 feet (810 m), B: 2460 feet (750m), and C: 250 feet (75m). Previously recorded site, 5ME924.6, is located at the south end of B; segment 5ME924.5 is located on private land, just south of C. Segment 5ME924.6 continues beyond the currently mapped segment B; however, it has been obliterated by the railroad siding and was not mapped as a part of this project. In the vicinity of this area of toll road, the extant right of way was utilized for a transmission line, likely the original alignment for the telegraph line mentioned in railroad company records. Those areas with evidence of the transmission line are recorded under site 5ME16695.2-4. The toll road likely followed the base of the hill slope to the south and around the Beavertail; however, this was located on private property and was not mapped as part of this project.

Evaluation and Management Recommendation

The Roan Creek Toll Road, as a whole, qualifies for inclusion on the NRHP under Criterion A due to its contribution to the patterns of events in history relating to settlement and community development and Criterion B, for its association with Henry Rhone's accomplishments. Because the full alignment of the road has not been surveyed and individual features not fully documented, in accordance with Criterion D, the road may be likely to yield additional information important to the history of the area. The segment recorded with this project retains integrity and supports the overall eligibility of the site. Protection and preservation are recommended.

Segment 5ME924.9

The area south of the Beavertail tunnel was surveyed for the roadbed, however; only two areas were still extant. These are located approximately 1675 feet (500m) west of the tunnel, within historic sheltered camp site 5ME21641. Two extant road beds are present. The one to the east rises from the bottom of the hillslope to the west. It branches with one segment climbing up to the sheltered camp and the lower segment continuing along the lower bench. The branch measures 135 feet (40m) and the longer, lower road measures 360 feet (100m). The upper road ends once the slope levels off and the lower appears to have been obliterated during railroad construction. The segment to the west picks up where the slope begins its descent. It measures 215 feet (65m). The retaining wall ends and the roadway is again non-extant. No other signs of the road or road features are visible. This segment is characterized by rock retaining walls constructed from local sandstone. Aggregate from blasting operations was present, but it is not certain whether the retaining walls were constructed from the aggregate or whether the rock was gathered and reduced as necessary from the surrounding area.

Evaluation and Management Recommendations

The Roan Creek Toll Road, as a whole, qualifies for inclusion on the NRHP under Criterion A due to its contribution to the patterns of events in history relating to settlement and community development and Criterion B, for its association with Henry Rhone's accomplishments. Because the full alignment of the road has not been surveyed and individual features not fully documented, in accordance with Criterion D, the road may be likely to yield additional information important to the history of the area. The segment recorded with this project retains integrity and supports the overall eligibility of the site. Protection and preservation are recommended.

Site **5ME931**, a historic cistern, is located northeast of the Colorado River and southwest of the Beavertail Railroad Tunnel. Elevation is 4800 feet. Vegetation is riparian in nature with cottonwood and Russian olive trees, grass, cattail, equisetum ("horsetail"), wild rose, and other shrubs. Soils consist of Hesperus-Empedrado, moist-Pagoda complex; at the

site soils are residuum and colluvium derived from interbedded sandstone and shale. Ground visibility was 5% due to dense riparian vegetation.

The site was originally recorded in 1977 by Grand River Consultants. It was only described as "Rock cistern - associated with the early railroad." A report written by Kathy Engles and Anne Casey in 1979 described it in greater depth: "Riverside–west end of Beavertail Tunnel. Tank foundation, pumphouse, well and shanty, and cistern (still exists) 20 feet deep; 10 acre feet of water, 13 ½ feet in drain. The cistern at Riverside still holds water, but the pumphouse, well, and shanty are gone." The site was reevaluated in 2011 by C. Briggs, and J. Gabriel with ERO Resources Corp. They described it as, "circular cistern that has been excavated into alluvial sediments."

The current project revisited, mapped, and photographed the site. The cistern still appears as previously reported. Indications of other structures were searched for, but none were found due to dense vegetation and presumed surface disturbance from railroad activities and the construction of Interstate 70.

Riverside does not appear as a railway siding on early maps, although it could have been related to railway use. Archival research revealed a photograph taken at the cistern location which was attributed to "Plumb Ranch" and "Harvey Ranch." David Sundal wrote in the leaflet, Historical Notes (Mesa County Historical Society) the following: "From Rifle, Bob Lutiesicz took a Midland Trail to Tunnel Station. From there he walked to the nearby farm of a Mr. Plumb where he was to be a farmhand. The farm was on level land along the riverside (Plate 5). Farmer Plumb grew a variety of produce. No road reached the farm." Henry S. Plumb patented land at the nose of the Beavertail in 1912, but it is not unthinkable that he may have lived at cistern location. Additional research revealed a H.S. Plumb was recorded in the U.S. Federal Census in 1910 and was listed just prior to ditch workers (who would have been working south of Beavertail Mountain), as well as the Mitchell family, who lived near Tunnel Station, north of the Beavertail. Plumb was 64 at the time of the census, widowed, and his occupation is listed as farmer.

A Rio Grande Junction Railway Right-of-Way and Track Map dated June 30, 1919 indicated that the presence of a "Foundation Abandoned" and "Water Tank" just west of the tunnel portal. Based on the available information, the cistern was likely constructed prior to 1910 and abandoned prior to 1919.

Evaluation and Management Recommendation

The site was declared officially need data in 2012. The site retains integrity of location, materials, workmanship, design, and setting. The feature is intact and functioning with minimal weathering. The current project reevaluates the site as eligible, based on the presence of a structure that embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction and represents the work of a master (Criterion C). Protection and preservation are recommended.

Plate 5. Image of historic structure at cistern, 5ME931 (Mangnall 2015).

Site **5ME16695**, a historic transmission line, is located within DeBeque Canyon on the west side of the Colorado River. Elevation is 4920 feet. The cliff sides are rocky and eroded, formed from residuum and colluvium derived from sandstone, shale, limestone, or siltstone. Vegetation is sparse, consisting of grasses like Indian ricegrass, wheatgrass, and cheatgrass, shadscale, cactus, sagebrush, rabbitbrush, serviceberry, squaw bush, and occasional juniper trees. Vegetation is more dense near the river with cottonwood trees and other riparian plants.

The site was originally recorded in 2008 by TEC, Inc. It was described as:

> ...a segment of transmission line (electric/telephone) running parallel to the Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad on its west side. Its age is unclear. Access to the resource was somewhat restricted to time of survey. The line contains both aqua glass and brown ceramic insulators and there is evidence that some of the original poles have been destroyed and replaced during maintenance of the line. The resource is still in use and extends well beyond the current recorded segment to both the north and south (Tyberg and Barclay 2008).

The current project encountered abandoned transmission poles during the recording of portions of the Roan Creek Toll Road. These are presumed to be part of the same transmission line recorded by previous investigations; however, no features remain in use.

According to Colorado History: A Context for Historical Archaeology (Church et al. 2007:422-423) telegraph lines were quickly adopted by railroads. Most telegraph lines

followed railroad rights-of-way. They were typically overhead wires strung on poles. To minimize interference and maintain signal strength, the wires were separated from the wooden poles by glass or ceramic insulators. Until the 1960s most of the transmission lines in Colorado, and virtually all of the telephone lines were carried on wooden poles, or wooden pole structures, such as H-frames. With respect to site 5ME16695, it is very likely that it was constructed in 1890 or sometime after as a feature of the railroad. If it is associated with the Rio Grande Junction Railroad, it would have followed the right-of-way from New Castle to Palisade. It is unclear when this particular line was decommissioned, but it may have coincided with the construction of the Shoshone to Palisade Overhead Transmission Line, 5ME17996. The segment from DeBeque to Palisade was constructed in 1941 (Croll and Briggs 2012). It is likely that the operational transmission line referenced by Tyberg and Barclay in 2008 is actually site 5ME17996.

The segments recorded for this project have integrity of location (artifacts are located in the same place as originally constructed). None of the other aspects of integrity are present. Because the poles have been sawn down and left haphazard along the corridor, elements of workmanship and design are missing. Materials have likely been removed by artifact hunters. Feeling and Setting have been altered by the presence of the interstate corridor. Although research into the line was conducted, no clear association could be determined. It is likely to be associated with the operation of the railroad, as it was known that the railroad had a telegraph line during the early years. No information could be located that supports an early date or a terminal date for its use. A modern transmission line is present in the area, however, it does not follow the same right of way and does not appear to be directly associated with the railroad.

Segment 5ME16695.2

This segment measures 885 feet (270 m). The segment is characterized by remnants of transmission line poles, insulators and pole stumps (that still remain in the ground). The majority of posts remaining are the cross members that carried the wires. The support posts were removed. It also appears, based on the differing states of preservation of the wood, either that the posts may have been replaced more than once, or repaired on site. Insulators consist of clear, aquamarine, and stoneware. A brown stoneware insulator was discovered marked with LOCKE 2. These were made by the Locks Insulator Co. between 1925 and 1945 based on the marking and glazing characteristics (personal communication with Paul Greaves 2016). The aqua-marine insulator was manufactured by Hemingray.

<u>Evaluation and Management Recommendation</u>

The transmission line, as a whole, may qualify for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, for its contribution to the broad pattern of history if conclusive evidence can associate the transmission line with the operation of the railroad. Also, undocumented portions of the line may yield additional information important to the history of the area (Criterion D). Segment 5ME16695.2 does not appear to support the overall

eligibility of the resource due to lack of integrity. No further work is recommended.

Segment 5ME16695.3

This segment measures 165 feet (50m). Remnants of support poles and cross members that carried the transmission wires, and aquamarine insulators are present. Few artifacts were located along this segment and no features relating to the transmission line were found.

Evaluation and Management Recommendation

The transmission line, as a whole, may qualify for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, for its contribution to the broad pattern of history, if conclusive evidence can associate the transmission line with the operation of the railroad. Also, undocumented portions of the line may yield additional information important to the history of the area (Criterion D). Segment 5ME16695.3 does not appear to support the overall eligibility of the resource due to lack of integrity. No further work is recommended.

Segment 5ME16695.4

This segment measures 405 feet (125m). It consists of several areas where transmission line artifacts (wire, support poles and cross members) have been piled after being cut down. Aquamarine and clear insulators were observed. This section of transmission line is located within site 5ME21641.

Evaluation and Management Recommendation

The transmission line, as a whole, may qualify for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, for its contribution to the broad pattern of history, if conclusive evidence can associate the transmission line with the operation of the railroad. Also, undocumented portions of the line may yield additional information important to the history of the area (Criterion D). Segment 5ME16695.4 does not appear to support the overall eligibility of the resource due to lack of integrity. No further work is recommended.

Site **5ME21641**, a historic sheltered camp, is located within DeBeque Canyon along a bench above the Colorado River. Elevation is between 4800 and 4880 feet. The soils are rocky and eroded, formed from residuum and colluvium derived from sandstone, shale, limestone, or siltstone. Vegetation is sparse, consisting of grasses like Indian ricegrass, wheatgrass, and cheatgrass. Shadscale, cactus, sagebrush, rabbitbrush, serviceberry, squaw bush, and occasional juniper trees are also present.

The site is characterized by numerous rock walls that form shelters, bread ovens, and a sparse scatter of historic artifacts. The site lacks formal trash dumps/pits and location of privy

areas could only be inferred. The site is divided into three loci (Appendix A.3).

Feature 1 is an isolated bread oven. It is located at the far east end of the site. It is constructed from local sandstone and iron railroad railing. Rocks were placed on the ground to form an oval outline. Rails were placed parallel to one another in a north-south alignment. Additional rails were placed on top of the support rails in a perpendicular fashion. Finally, rocks were placed to cover the rails and form the oven. A lintel piece that would have formed the doorway has been dislodged over time. The oven measures 1.9m long, 1.6m wide, and 1m high. No other features are present in the vicinity.

Locus 1 is an area of rock blasting and aggregate production. Relatively shallow boreholes, approximately 15cm deep, were drilled into boulders at an interval of every 15cm. Rows were spaced at a width of about 75cm. The borehole measured 1" in diameter. It is believed, based on evidence at the west end of the site, that black powder was employed as the blasting agent. Detonating explosives often required workers to manually light fuses. Based on the remaining un-detonated boreholes, as well as those that were blasted, it appears that workers set the charges off one row at a time. During construction on the Central Pacific railroad, workers used hammers and chisels to create the boreholes; however, it is unknown how the boreholes were created at this site. Present within this activity area are four large boulders with evidence of boreholes still present. It appears that the majority of aggregate formed during the blasting has been removed from the location.

Extant portions of toll road are located west of Locus 1, as one enters Locus 2 from the east. The road forks, with one segment staying on the rim edge and the other leading up to the bench at the location of the Locus 2 activity areas. These portions of toll road exhibit similar characteristics as the other segments, with shoring along the rim edge to prevent/discourage erosional sheet wash.

Locus 2 consists of a large camp area comprised of four masonry habitation features (Features 2-5). A bread oven (Feature 7) is located near the largest and most well-constructed of the structures. There are several suspect areas where tent features may have been, as well as fencing. Transmission wire, cut transmission posts, and glass and ceramic insulators from site 5ME16695.4 are also present within the locus.

The general construction of the habitation structures is as follows: one to two large boulders were utilized as a support wall with hand constructed masonry walls extending out to form the living space. It is possible that canvas tents were then placed over the walls. Two of the structures have evidence of a fireplace or firepits.

Feature 2 is a habitation structure positioned against a single large boulder. The walls appear to have collapsed somewhat since the period of use. The floor space measures approximately 3m in diameter. It is generally horseshoe shaped, with the wall extending out in a circular manner away from a single large, overhanging boulder. The wall is currently

about 1m tall. There is an opening in the wall, on the east-southeast side of the structure that likely served as an entryway. It measures approximately 1m in diameter.

Feature 3 is a three walled shelter that utilizes a slightly overhanging boulder for the fourth wall. The floor space measures approximately 3m wide by 5.5m long. Walls measured between 1 and 1.5m in height. The wall incorporates a boulder that is relatively low to the ground and extends away from the shelter. A hearth or stove is present in the long wall. The opening is 75cm high and 80cm wide. It is 1m deep. A large lintel over the opening of the hearth is present, as is charcoal.

Feature 4 is located on the rim edge and is constructed from two boulders that lean against one another forming a roofed shelter. A solid wall, measuring less than 1m in height is present along the north side. Smaller walls forming the doorway are located on the south side overlooking DeBeque Canyon. These measure between 50 and 75cm in height. The floor space measures approximately 4m in diameter. A fire has been lit in this structure, although no formal hearth is present.

Feature 5 is a shelter constructed between two boulders that form the walls on the east and west sides. The back wall measures approximately 50cm in height and more than 2m in length. To the east of the entryway, built into the wall, is a hearth or stove. It measures approximately 80cm wide and 60cm tall. Based on the present ground surface behind the back wall, it appears that the floor area was dug out to create the shelter.

Other features include other masonry structures: an unknown structure (Feature 6), a bread oven (Feature 7), a collapsed stove or hearth (Feature 8), mounds of aggregate, remnants of an abandoned transmission line (5ME16695.5) and segments of the Roan Creek Toll Road (5ME924.9). The function of Feature 6 is unknown. It is located on the rim edge and consists of two low walls that are perpendicular to the rim edge. The rock walls are approximately 3m in length and are about 1m in width. They are spaced 2m apart. In the same area is a rock filled depression that may have been a privy and a mound of aggregate located on top of a large boulder. The bread oven, Feature 7, measures 2m in diameter and is 1m high. The door opening is 50cm. Small amounts of charcoal and fire-reddened sandstone are present. It is not associated with a habitation feature and may represent a communal oven. Feature 8 is a collapsed stove or hearth, constructed of local rock that was stacked against a large boulder and measures 1 by 1m by 0.75cm tall. Another pile of aggregate is present southwest of Feature 2 and may represent either simply aggregate material for building or a large, collapsed bread oven. It measures about 6m in diameter. The rocks are about grapefruit sized or smaller.

Locus 3 is located at the extreme southwest end of the site. Three features (9-11), likely habitation structures, are present, as well as two bread ovens (Features 12 and 13). None of the habitation structures had stoves or ovens. The last feature, 14, is of unknown purpose.

Feature 9 is located on a slope overlooking a bench area. Large rocks form a small wall around a single large boulder. Floor space is limited to approximately 1m wide by 3-4m long. The wall is between 0.5 and 1m tall. Large rocks were used and little time was spent to fit the rocks together.

Feature 10 is more complex. It is located on a large, flat bench between three large boulders and numerous smaller boulders. It consists of two rooms, separated by a low rock wall. Other rock walls, also low, form the exterior room walls. Each room measures 2.5-3 m in diameter. The walls are less than a meter tall.

Feature 11, a possible habitation and storage room, is located against and around two boulders (one of which is much larger than the other). A wall measuring less than 0.5m high is located between the two boulders and continues around the larger of the two boulders, forming a wall for a deep, low overhang. The ceiling of the overhang is less than a meter from the ground surface. The floor space measures approximately 1.5m in length and 1m in depth from the drip line to the back wall. The front remains open; however, rocks were stacked on both of the outer 'edges' to create a small room.

Features 12 and 13 are bread ovens made from local sandstone. Feature 12 is located in close proximity to Feature 10, just downslope where the bench begins to level. It is similar to the others found on the site, measuring approximately 1m in height and 1-1.5m in diameter. The oven has a relatively large vent hole in the top. Like others, a large lintel forms the opening in the front, which measures about 0.3m wide. An inspection of the interior shows fire reddening and friability of the rocks inside. Feature 13 measures just over 1m tall and is approximately 1.5m in diameter. Like the others, a large lintel piece makes up the front opening. There is a very large vent hole in the top with several rocks missing. Most of the rocks show evidence of fire reddening. Feature 14 is a horse-shoe shaped masonry structure. It measures 3.5m in length and is about a meter tall. One wall may have collapsed. The function is unknown.

The following information is excerpted from the article: Who's Been Workin' on the Railroad?: An Examination of the Construction, Distribution, and Ethnic Origins of Domed Rock Ovens on Railroad-Related Sites (Wegars 1991).

> *Small domed rock structures are found throughout western North America and are frequently found on railroad construction camp sites and in mining regions. Typically, ovens are 1-2m in height and 1-3m in diameter. They are domed shaped, built of local stone, and originally mortared with mud, although usually now appear unmortared. Most ovens in good condition have a complete dome, with no top opening. Others have a top or side opening and all have a doorway in the front, often with a large stone lintel. Because charcoal was generally raked out and to one side, interiors rarely contain any charcoal or other signs of burning (Wegars 1991).*

The domed structures found at the site are nearly identical to those described by Wegars. They are roughly 1m tall and 1-2m in diameter. Most have a top opening and doorway with a large lintel. All of the rock is locally acquired sandstone and showed evidence of fire reddening. Small amounts of charcoal is present within several of the structures.

There are several potential construction dates. The site was very likely occupied prior to 1915. Very little trash debris was found on the site and no formal dumps were located. The only notable items were 10 to 20 metal containers with the initials CPW embossed on the lid. There was a bunghole but no venthole, leading investigators to believe it was not used for liquid substances. Further research indicated the containers held black powder and came from California Powder Works. The California Powder Works was incorporated in 1861 in the city of Santa Cruz, California (Plate 6). It was established for the purpose of providing clients west of the Rocky Mountains with a source of black gunpowder. They ceased operations in 1914 (Brown n.d.).

Plate 6. Workmen at the California Powder Works, 1901 (Oakley n.d.). The black powder cans are identical to the ones found at the site.

The earliest, and most likely, date of occupation is 1890, during the original construction of the Rio Grande Junction Railroad. More specifically, it was likely occupied during the grading and rock blasting phases of construction given the presence of gunpowder containers. "...it has been assumed here that no major differences existed between camps of the two types (Buckles 1976:79-80), and, in fact, graders and blasters may have lived in the same camps. Any differences between the two groups of workers were probably more

apparent at the work sites than at the habitation sites" (Rossillon 1984:50). Although documents regarding Italian railroad workers are seemingly non-existent, similar sites have been found in the region, adding evidence to support the likelihood that the camp was occupied during the construction of the railroad. The following information is taken from a report on the findings of *The Curecanti Archaeological Project: The Archeology of Marion, an Historic Railroad Camp in Curecanti National Recreation Area, Colorado*.

> *...Italians are believed to have composed a large part of the labor force on the Lake City Branch grading operations in 1889. Although local newspapers made no mention of the workers' ethnic affiliation in their accounts of the branch's construction in that year, one secondary source (Vandenbusche and Borneman 1979:55) indicates that a large group of Italian railroad construction laborers existed at Grabiola, about six miles downstream from Marion in the Lake Fork Canyon. As will be discussed, the stone ovens standing at most of the railroad construction camps in the canyon are of the type usually built by Italians in the United States during the mid- to late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Rossillon 1984:54).*

The report details the padrone system, which often kept Italian workers in a state of poverty, by exploiting the newly immigrated labor force. "Padrones" were Italian labor agents who accompanied the labor force to the work site, where he provided housing and food for his crews and translated the contractor's work orders from English to Italian. The padroni frequently retained portions of the Italian workman's pay for themselves and provided crude living arrangements and low quality food. "Bread was one of the foods that the Italians usually cooked for themselves. This they baked in stone ovens especially built for that purpose" (Iorizzo 1970:50). Even though the men occupied a work site for only a short time, the ovens were typically constructed at each new campsite (U.S. Immigration Commission 1911:427). Remains, or the lack thereof at this site, point to a diet of fruits, vegetables, and bread, fitting with other sites populated by Italian immigrants. No potted meat cans, bones, or kitchen sauce bottles were identified during the initial investigations.

At the Marion site, the majority of habitations were wall tents. One rock walled structure was present, consisting of dry laid stone walls. Four bread ovens were located at the Marion site.

> *The remains of four ovens...serve as the only evidence of the Italian ethnicity of the Marion inhabitants. The ovens, which were used primarily for baking bread, are a standard feature in all but one railroad construction camp (5GN1725) identified in the Lake Fork Canyon....The four stone ovens had walls 1 ½ - 2ft thick, while their inside diameters were 4 ½ -5 ½ft. The stone in the features was dry-laid, and residual earth and gravel between the rocks and around the bases of the features suggest that they were capped with such material in a manner similar to that indicated by a local informant (Pete*

Venturo personal communication 6/83). Single large blocks of stone formed the lintels over the doorways of Features 25, 26, and 27. No vent was observed in any of the four ovens at Marion, but as at other more complete features in the Lake Fork Canyon, each must have had a small hole near the top oat the back to regulate draft (Rossillon 1984:73).

The report goes on to make the point that if individuals cooked for themselves, it would be reasonable to find a stove or hearth associated with each habitation structure. Furthermore, these would possibly be absent if a cookhouse or dining hall were present. It was noted at the site recorded during the current project, that eight of the 14 structures had some sort of means for heating or cooking. Four ovens, three habitations with formal stoves/hearths, one isolated stove/hearth, and one habitation with evidence of fire were present.

Because unskilled Italian immigrant laborers were fairly independent in their living arrangements, both the types and internal features of structures found at Italian laborer camps should also reflect considerable variation. If each man was responsible for his own cooking, the camps would have neither a cookhouse or dining hall. Instead, individual habitation features would have contained hearths or stoves for cooking. Each archaeological habitation that had a hearth or stove should therefore contain evidence either as flecks of charcoal or tin stove fragments inside the feature or ash pile outside the entrance where contents of the stove would have been periodically dumped (Rossillon 1984:110). No evidence of a communal structure, such as a cookhouse, dining hall, or bunkhouse was found.

The next possible occupation date is 1910, based on the US Federal Census from that year. The records indicate a large number of Italian ditch workers were located southwest of the Tunnel (based on other known recorded residences in the vicinity, both to the northeast and southwest). A newspaper article from 1910 reports, "J.J. Lumsden is one of the oldest and largest contractors in the state, having built and installed the water works systems at Canon City, Rifle, and Palisade and is now building the dam across the Grand River for the Orchard Mesa and Palisade and Mesa County irrigation district." Oral histories confirm the report, stating that an abutment for the dam is still visible, "There is a concrete abutment on the west bank of the river just below south of the tunnel, which can be seen from Interstate 70. This is believed to have been part of an older dam that was built across the river in 1910, prior to the construction of the Roller Dam" (Gary Hines, personal communication 2016).

Finally, railroad workers were needed in 1914 to lift the rail bed to compensate for the rise in the river water level when the Bureau of Reclamation constructed the roller dam south of the tunnel. It is believed that Greeks were used for much of the construction along this portion of railroad. Several ethnic groups have been mentioned in connection with rock ovens on railroad construction camp sites, including Chinese, Scandinavians, Greeks, and Italians (Wegars 1991:42). Wegars does go on to discredit both the Chinese and Scandinavian associations based on lack of evidence. Substantial evidence (photographs and interviews)

exists for both the Greek and Italian use of bread ovens (ibid:44-45).

The site retains the following aspects of integrity: Location (site is in the same location as it was during the period of significance); Design (the features retain elements that create form, plan, space, structure, and style); Workmanship (the features point to evidence of a craftsman's labor and skill); and Materials (the features exhibit characteristics that evince a particular pattern or configuration). Association is likely linked to the use of Italian immigrants on the railroad or for water projects. Setting and Feeling have been impacted by the construction of an interstate highway system within auditory and visual range of the site.

Evaluation and Management Recommendation

The site is field evaluated as eligible for listing on the NRHP under Criterion A, for its association with the growth and development of Mesa County; and Criterion C, for the presence of architectural features that embody a type and method of construction that is associated with specific cultural groups. The site may also be eligible under Criterion D, for its potential to yield additional information regarding the history of the area. Protection and preservation are recommended.

DISCUSSION

A surprising discovery during the field work was the presence of site 5ME21641, a historic sheltered camp. It appears, based on the field survey, that this site was a grading/blasting camp occupied by Italian railroad workers. This site is remarkable due to the numerous ethnically defined cultural features, specifically, bread ovens. In Colorado, during the site's period of significance, 1890-1915, very few cultural groups were known to be associated with the construction of bread ovens: Italians and Italian-Americans (railroad construction sites in the Lake Fork Valley, including 5GN1664; Cherry Creek Construction Camp, 5LP1915, and The Hook, 5LP1921), Greeks (Carbonera 5GF1562), and German and German-Americans (The Stitz Place 5ME6826).

Census and newspaper accounts indicate immigrants were relied upon for labor on the railroad and ditch projects. Most railroad construction crews were either locals who took advantage of the temporary work or single men, often immigrants, who followed the large construction projects. According to Ann E. Vileisis,

> *It is very likely that Chinese and Italian laborers built track west of Grand Junction because they constructed other proximal segments of the line and eventually worked as section laborers along the tracks of the Utah Extension. In addition, the letter list in the Grand Junction News posted a special listing for Italians and occasionally posted a letter for a Chinese person during the construction phase"* (Vileisis 1992:30).

It is also known that Italians worked on an 1889 railroad camp in what is now the

Curecanti National Recreation Area during construction of the Lake City branch of the D&RG railroad.

> *A company might build a line itself, or have one of its subsidiaries handle the construction. It might contract the job to a grading firm, which in turn could build the line itself or further subcontract the construction. Finally, the railroad company, contractor, or subcontractor might hire a labor agent to supply workers (Buckles 1983:218-219). The Denver and Rio Grande Railway Company apparently used all of the above methods at different times and on different lines....During the 1881 construction phase of the Lake City Branch, the D&RG used some of its own employees to construct a short section between Gateview and Lake City, while at the same time contracting out other sections to several other groups (Lake City Silver World 7/30/81, 8/20/81). In turn, one of those firms subcontracted some of their grading and rock work along the line (Lake City Silver World 8/20/81), while at about the same time, the Denver and Rio Grande was searching for laborers through an agent in Italy (Athearn 1977:102)* (Rossillon 1984:51).

Editorial commentary was made regarding foreign immigration by the Aspen Evening Chronicle:

> *Something should be done to check our foreign immigration and some kinds should be entirely prohibited. The Chinese who come here expecting to return to China, and under contracts which provide that in case of their death in this country, their bones shall be returned to the celestial kingdom, should be totally excluded. The "dago" - Italian or Bohemian laborers, who come over on contracts for the purpose of competing with our home labor, in constructing lines of railroad, mining, etc., and driving out the native workmen, the pauper element, and criminal class, frequently sent here by the connivance of their own government to save the expense of their support or imprisonment, should no longer be allowed entrance into our ports, and either temporary or permanent residence. Our naturalization laws are also defective and should be amended so as to keep from the polls such ignorant, debased, and corrupt classes as now make up the bulk of the foreign element, that every year obtain a foothold upon our shores. The bold, open stand taken by some Catholics and Lutherans against our common schools, and against education in the English language, shows that the old fight of church and state, against civil and religious liberty, is coming up again for a new settlement. Truly, "eternal vigilance is the price of liberty" (Aspen Evening Chronicle, May 14, 1890).*

Locally, newspaper accounts used derogatory terms when discussing the immigrant workforce:

> *The Rio Grande Western now has a force of 175 dagoes and Japs employed in ballasting with rock and track between this city and Cravasse, a distance of 18 miles. The track is being raised 18 inches the entire distance mentioned, and assistant roadmaster John Fogarty is in charge of the work. More men are needed and many are being shipped in from the west, as they can be secured. The laborers now employed get $1.65 a day and board themselves. The Japs live chiefly on tea and rice, having their own cooking outfits along with them. The Italians do the same, macaroni being their leading article of diet. A traveler just in from the west says 'The macaroni boxes along the line of the western are thicker than the leaves in the valley of Vallambrosa'* (Grand Junction Evening Sun, August 17, 1901).

There were also colorful descriptions used with regard to the Orchard Mesa water project: "If the influx of foreign members of the shovelers' union to work on the Orchard Mesa project continues, it is more than likely that many of us will become pretty well grounded in several languages, principally Italian with spaghetti trimmings" (*Palisade Tribune,* June 26, 1909). Along with derogatory editorial descriptions, there were also many incidents that resulted in death for the immigrants. The Daily Sentinel and Palisade Tribune reported several deaths in the vicinity of Tunnel. The following describes a murder caused by a quarrel:

> *Andrew W. Stetson Shoots and Kills David Gillespie, A Track-Walker. The Former Landed in Jail and Latter Lies at the Morgue - Self Defense is Claimed for the Killing. At about 8 o'clock this morning a telegram was received at the union depot saying that a murder had been committed at the section house on the line of the Rio Grande Junction railway, which is situated just a short distance beyond the tunnel, about seventeen miles from this city....At the jail Sheriff Reeder searched him to see if he had upon his person any concealed weapons, but none were found. He was asked his name and he gave it as Andrew W. Stetson and that he was a Swede....[T]he man gave the following version of the killing. He said that they were both track walkers, walking in opposite direction on the line of the road. He had been having some difficulty with Gillespie for some time past, the dead man at various times threatening to kill him or do him bodily injury. Last night they had some words and the quarrel was continued this morning. At about a quarter past seven o'clock words were passed between them and he started out of the door. Gillespie followed him and threatened to kill him. He thought he was about to shoot him and pulling his revolver he fired. He at once started for this city to give himself up to the officers of the law. The deceased is an old timer in this section and is well known to a great many people. He was not of a quarrelsome disposition and had many friends* (Daily Sentinel, May 22, 1897).

Another murder at Tunnel siding was reported; however, this one had the appearance

of friends who had gotten into a quarrel:

> *Peter Andreusi, the Italian section hand who was shot by his partner, Baldo Pandarino last Sunday afternoon, died at St. Matthews' hospital in Grand Junction on Monday night. After the shooting the murderer disappeared and no clue was found whereby he might be located. Andreusi made an ante-mortem statement declaring he was as much to blame as the other Italian and asked that the man who did the shooting be allowed to escape. The sheriff is still trying to locate him. The men were both section hands employed on the railroad and lived in the bunk house near the east end of the tunnel, several miles above Cameo. They had been working there for some time and were "baching" it together, buyng their groceries jointly. The men had been quarreling for two or three days about their accounts. Andreusi maintaining that the other had been unfair in the charges. The men had been drinking on Sunday and Andreusi persisted in his demands that Pandarino make good some imagined differences in money matters. The latter is said to have been the more reasonable of the two, and tried to argue with his partner. Andreusi finally struck Pandarino a violent blow and drew back to strike him again when Pandarino drew a revolver and shot twice. The first shot went wild but the other passed clean through his body and he fell to the floor, while Pandarino disappeared and has not been seen since* (Palisade Tribune, April 2, 1910).

The Tribune also reported that many immigrants sent money home to their families:

> *On Tuesday money orders to the amount of $1,233 were sent through the Palisade postoffice to points in Greece by natives of that country who are employed in this section of the Grand valley as railroad section hands, on the ditches and other places. All of them work for small wages. Ten of the men sent $100 each, two men sent $80 each and one sent $73. It frequently happens that a bunch of Italian laborers will come to the postoffice and send $100 each, but Tuesday was the heaviest day known here for money orders among the Greek laborers, all of whom are a thrifty lot* (Palisade Tribune, September 24, 1910:5).

On the same topic, there were also reports of thefts of funds not yet sent:

> *An Italian section hand named Peter Rafaello complained to Sheriff Schrader that he had been robbed of certificates of deposit amounting to $700, one night recently, by one of his fellow workmen while asleep in the bunk house near the tunnel. Some of the men were arrested but the sheriff was unable to find anything of an incriminating nature. Peter did not state just how he came to hold out that much in making his remittances to Italy. He had evidently*

"fudged" on the people at home (Palisade Tribune, July 3, 1909:3).

Worker safety was also an issue for track walkers and section hands:

> *An Italian section hand named John Aleno was drowned in the river near the tunnel Saturday. He stepped from the track down a steep embankment to avoid a D. & R. G. train and when he placed his foot upon a loose boulder he rolled with it into the river. It is supposed he was stunned. The accident occurred in full sight of the passengers on the train. The body was recovered and taken to Grand Junction, where he lived. He was 27 years old and leaves a wife and children* (Palisade Tribune, August 7, 1909:3).

A man working on the river above the Orchard Mesa dam project reportedly fell in when their flat boat lurched:

> *An Italian laborer named Clem Zaia, aged about 30 years, was drowned yesterday morning in the Grand river above the Orchard mesa dam and his body had not been recovered up to last night. Zaia was working in the stream on a flat boat in company with several other Italians when a sudden jerk of the boat precipitated him and another laborer named Giovani Ughetti into the water where it is 20 to 30 foot deep. Both disappeared from sight and were dragged by the undercurrent to the narrow opening on the north side where the river has not been closed up and the water runs very swift....Zaia's body was not seen after he disappeared from the boat, and it is hard to determine what became of it, but it is supposed to have gone down stream with the current. Rescuing parties were busy all the rest of the day dragging the river and using every means possible to locate it....The gang are in the employ of J.J. Lumsden of Grand Junction, the contractor* (Palisade Tribune Septermber 3, 1910).

Zaia's body was recovered nine days later when it eventually surfaced where "swirling waters had left it at the base of the dam" (Palisade Tribune, September 17, 1910:6).

In 1914, during the construction of the Grand Valley Roller Dam, Greek railroad workers used materials from the dam construction to raise the railway tracks in order to compensate for the increased water level from the dam. Wages ranged from $1.75 per day for laborers to $80.00 a month for foremen (Simonds 1994:17-18).

With respect the Roan Creek Toll Road, According to Chapter 8, Linear Resources in Colorado History: A Context for Historical Archaeology, road networks should be evaluated as connecting systems for the role that they played in historic events and the development of resources, industries, and communities.

DeBeque Canyon connects several communities. At the head of the canyon is the townsite of DeBeque, Colorado and at the mouth is Palisade, Colorado. Within the canyon is the hamlet of Cameo, which was settled in the early 1900s. A railway siding, Akin, is located at the mouth of Horseshoe Canyon. Here, on the south side of Horseshoe Canyon, a trail leaves the toll road and conveys traffic (by horse) up to Wagon Track Ridge and Bunkwater Ridge. This large expanse of land was home to many farmers and ranchers during the early settlement years. Tunnel was the home to a railroad siding, as well as a ranch. A large tributary, Plateau Creek, feeds into the Colorado from the east, just north of Cameo. The creek flows from Plateau Valley, which is home to the communities of Plateau City, Collbran, Molina, and Mesa. Numerous people and families settled within DeBeque Canyon, either for farming and ranching, mining, or employment on one of the various works projects. Not only did the toll road connect the northeastern portion of the state with Grand Junction, but it provided the residents of northern Mesa County with a sense of connection to their larger community.

The Roan Creek Toll Road is credited with connecting the east and the west and also serves as a classic example of the frontier spirit of determination. Today, the canyon hosts travelers by train and by interstate highway system, both carrying people at speeds and numbers unimaginable when the toll road was constructed.

MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

The Roan Creek Toll Road existed long enough to be remembered as an historic trail, but not long enough to become a road. The right of way has been obliterated in many areas by the modern railway system that is present today. The trail is not shown on any known maps, but extant portions are still visible as one passes through the canyon. Few sites are known to be associated with the toll road, likely due to the short amount of time it was in use. Sites that may have been associated are reported here, an historic cistern (5ME931), a transmission line that utilized portions of the toll road (5ME16695), and an historic sheltered camp (5ME21641). Protection and preservation are recommended for all of the sites. Due to the inaccessible nature of the majority of the sites, they are still in good condition. Future work in this area might include additional research and investigation with regard to site 5ME21641 and gaining access to private property for the purpose of documenting additional segments of toll road.

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Appendix A:
Overview Maps
OAHP Site Forms

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