

APPENDIX D CAMP GEORGE WEST HISTORIC DISTRICT

Camp George West is a Colorado Army National Guard installation located in central Jefferson County, Colorado, approximately 3 miles east of the City of Golden and 10 miles west of downtown Denver. The facility is situated in an unincorporated area known as Pleasant View, with the City of Golden to the west and the City of Lakewood to the east.

Camp George West Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in 1993 (NRHP 2008). This appendix discusses the district's location and setting, background, and historic significance, then describes the resources within the district boundaries that could be affected under the Proposed Action.¹

Location and Setting

The geographic setting and location of the Camp George West site has strongly influenced its development and architecture. The site is located at the edge of the foothills of the Rocky Mountains and encompasses part of South Table Mountain. Lena Gulch and unnamed tributaries flow from west to east through the camp, and dry washes extend down the sides of South Table Mountain and join Lena Gulch. The steep sides of South Table Mountain provided a natural backdrop for target practice, and the top of the mountain was quarried for stone used in street surfacing, construction of many Camp George West buildings, and other projects. The relatively flat part of the camp lying south of the plateau was used for training and as a parade ground, while the southernmost portion north and south of South Golden Road was the setting for most of the facility's buildings.

The Pleasant View area, which lies mainly to the west and south of Camp George West, is an older residential area. More recent suburban residential and office development lies to the north and east. A profusion of intersecting roadways pass near or through the installation. Interstate 70 passes close to the southwest corner of the camp on a southwest-northeast axis. West Colfax Avenue (U.S. 40) and West 6th Avenue (U.S. 6) follow alignments south of the facility. South Golden Road cuts through the southern section of the camp on an east-west route.

NRHP terms used in this appendix

Site: the location of a significant event, a prehistoric or historic occupation or activity, or a building or structure, whether standing, ruined, or vanished, where the location itself possesses historic, cultural, or archeological value regardless of the value of any existing structure

District: a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, or objects united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development

Building: a resource created principally to shelter any form of human activity, such as a house

Structure: a functional construction made for purposes other than creating shelter, such as a bridge

Object: a construction primarily artistic in nature or relatively small in scale and simply constructed, such as a statue or milestone

*Source: National Park Service:
http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb16a/nrb16a_appendix_IV.htm*

¹ The information in this appendix was obtained from two NRHP forms: (1) the Multiple Property Documentation Form, and (2) the Registration Form, prepared by Front Range Research Associates, Inc. (1992a, 1992b).

Contributing vs. Noncontributing Resources

Some historic districts, including Camp George West, contain a mix of contributing and noncontributing resources. A contributing resource is a site, building, structure, or object that adds to the historical associations, historic architectural qualities, or archeological values for which a property is significant. A contributing resource has the following characteristics:

- It was present during the period of time that the property achieved its significance;
- It relates to the documented significance of the property;
- It possesses historical integrity or is capable of yielding important information relevant to the significance of the property.

Any resource within a district that lacks such associations, qualities, or values is called a noncontributing resource.

Source: <http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins/arch/pt5.htm>

Background

The district is an architecturally cohesive collection of buildings and structures associated with a Colorado Army National Guard installation. Camp George West, established in 1903, was the Colorado National Guard's only permanent training facility and was an integral part of the National Guard's activities in Colorado, serving as the principal storage and supply center and the site of summer encampments. The district encompasses historic resources along both sides of South Golden Road, including the highest concentration of historic resources associated with the post. Included are the major historic administrative, residential, storage, utility, and training facilities of the camp, constructed during the period 1903 to 1945.

The resources reflect a variety of masonry techniques utilizing stone obtained on post lands and quarried from the camp quarry. One of the largest collections of Works Progress Administration (WPA)-sponsored buildings in Colorado is located on the grounds of Camp George West, reflecting the installation's significant role in providing employment during the 1930s.

The district incorporates 82 resources, including 64 (78 percent) contributing historic resources and 18 (22 percent) noncontributing resources. Of the 64 contributing historic resources, 51 are buildings, 11 are structures, and 2 are objects. The initial parcel of land acquired for the post in 1903 was cut on its southern end by South Golden Road and the track of the Denver and Inter-Mountain Railroad. This division was to influence the subsequent development of the installation. While the size of the post increased and contracted over the years, most of the buildings constructed at Camp George West are located in the southern section close to transportation facilities.

During the 1927-1941 period, a long east-west row of mess halls was built just north of South Golden Road. Two more mess halls were built farther to the north. Concrete tent pads were built in rows in an encampment area behind the mess halls and provided bases on which tents were pitched during summer encampments. Bathhouses/latrines were located on the east and west sides of the camp, and four magazine structures were in the northeast area. An administrative quadrangle also was built north of South Golden Road. The headquarters building and guardhouse are located here.

The area north of Lena Gulch contained a number of uses. The extreme western portion was developed as a rifle firing range in the mid-1920s. Four concrete firing lines are located here. The central area was used as a training area and parade ground for summer encampments and as a grass landing field for small

aircraft. A plane hangar and quonset hut installed during 1949 were later removed and the landing field abandoned in the late 1950s. The eastern portion of this area was developed as a recreation area during the 1930s, containing a recreation hall, outdoor swimming pool (no longer in existence), and tennis courts (no longer in existence).

The buildings and structures of the Camp George West Historic District have been categorized according to the following NRHP categories:

- administrative and general support buildings
- equipment and supply storage facilities
- residences, cantonment structures, and troop support buildings
- recreational facilities
- firing range
- water storage and distribution structures
- transportation-related facilities
- fence and gate structures

Historic Significance

The Camp George West Historic District is a concentrated and architecturally cohesive group of historic resources representing the historic growth and development of the Colorado National Guard's only permanent historic storage and training installation. The district is historically significant for the following reasons:

- In the field of military history, the district is associated with the historic activities of the Colorado National Guard and with the 757th Military Police Battalion of the World War II era.
- In the field of social history, the district is associated with numerous 1930s New Deal era public works relief projects.
- The district's architecture represents a large group of native stone and frame buildings designed to reflect an overall architectural theme and to perform a variety of functions required for National Guard activities. The architecture of the installation reflects the expanding role of the Colorado National Guard, the influence of popular architectural styles, evolution of military technology, and changes in construction methods and building materials.

Within the district, 68 of the 82 resources are associated with the development of the post prior to 1945. Only 14 of the properties within the district are of post-1945 construction. The period of significance extends from the creation of the post in 1903 to 1945, coinciding with the end of activities associated with World War II and the construction of temporary buildings during that era. Sixty-four (78 percent) of the resources within the district are more than 50 years old. Within the district is the oldest building still in existence on the post, the officers' clubhouse/caretaker's residence, reflecting the earliest period of development of the site. In addition, the district includes the majority of buildings erected during later historic periods of development in the 1920s and 1930s, with a few examples from the World War II era.

A substantial number of the buildings and structures erected during the 1930s as a result of New Deal public works relief programs are included in the district and form one of the largest collections of WPA-sponsored building in the state. Programs such as the WPA provided funding for construction of buildings and structures at the post during the Depression era. A camp for transient workers was established at the camp during the mid-1930s; over half of the historic resources at the post were built during this period.

The various projects employed hundreds of men and helped relieve area unemployment in Colorado. The buildings within the district are also associated with National Guard activities such as strike and riot duty, natural disaster assistance, mobilization for Mexican border service and for war, and military training. In addition, the post was a training site during World War II for military police.

A significant number of buildings within the district are constructed of native fieldstone and stone obtained from the post's quarry on South Table Mountain, which give the post a unique architectural identity. The early stone buildings constructed at Camp George West embody style elements such as gabled roofs, battered piers, and multi-pane windows and unquarried stone found on the post. The Depression-era buildings and structures reflect design elements such as multiple narrow windows, complex roofs, and a variety of wall projections increased the amount of labor necessary for their construction. Residences built during the 1930s feature multiple gables and multi-pane windows. The Depression-era buildings are largely composed of stone quarried on the installation. The small group of World War II temporary buildings erected at Camp George West represent standard plans and the conservation of labor and materials.

The majority of buildings within the district possess the physical characteristics required to be evaluated as contributing elements. In general, the storage buildings and the mess halls have undergone more alterations than other resources due to their adaptation to new uses. However, the original scale, construction techniques, workmanship, location, setting, and much of the original materials are still apparent in these resources. The most common alterations within the district are the remodeling of doors and windows, and less frequently, the addition of nonhistoric siding. A few buildings have been enlarged with enclosed entrance bays or small wings, but none of the additions is large or intrusive enough to diminish the integrity of the buildings. In general, the buildings within the district maintain a high integrity of design, scale, location, craftsmanship, setting, and materials, and as a group convey the historic associations which resulted in their creation.

Physical Characteristics of Historic Resources at Camp George West

The physical characteristics of the buildings erected at Camp George West were determined by the themes set by the early architecture of the post and the materials and manpower available at the time of construction. The first permanent building erected on the post was an officers' clubhouse/caretaker's residence, designed by architect Albert Bryan. Built in 1911-1912 south of South Golden Road, the officers' clubhouse/caretaker's residence utilized native stone construction with design elements such as a gabled roof, overhanging eaves with exposed rafters, and multi-pane windows. These elements influenced subsequent buildings and resulted in the creation of a unique architectural environment. Buildings erected during the 1910s and 1920s repeated elements of Bryan's work.

During the 1930s, a quarry that operated under the auspices of various public works programs supplied materials, and public relief agencies supplied manpower for buildings. George H. Merchant, architect for the buildings constructed during this period, used native stone for the post's buildings. The building design of this era had numerous narrow windows, wall buttresses, and complex rooflines in order to utilize as much labor as possible, thereby giving work to unemployed men. The built environment of the post grew substantially during the 1930s as a result of these public works projects.

During World War II, a small number of temporary buildings were erected following standard plans provided by the Quartermaster Corps. To conserve materials and time, these temporary buildings were simple frame structures similar to thousands of others built on military installations across the country.

Descriptions of the Potentially Affected Resources

Table D-1 lists the potentially affected resources at Camp George West, their year of construction, their historic status (contributing or noncontributing), and the nearest corridor(s) along which each resource lies. Of the 15 potentially affected buildings and structures, 13 are contributing resources and 2 are noncontributing resources. All of the potentially affected resources lie north of South Golden Road.

The following sections describe the buildings and structures that could be affected if one of the five proposed corridors is selected. The locations of these resources are shown on Figures D-1 and D-2.

Table D-1. Camp George West Resources Potentially Affected under the Proposed Action

Resource	Resource Number	Year of Construction	Historic Status	Nearest Proposed Corridor
<i>Administrative and General Support Buildings</i>				
Headquarters	45	1937	Contributing	D
Guardhouse	83	1940	Contributing	D
<i>Equipment and Supply Storage Facilities</i>				
Small Arms/ Ammunition Storage	33	1925	Contributing	D
Motor Vehicle Storage	111	1953	Noncontributing	D
<i>Residences, Cantonment Structures, and Troop Support Buildings</i>				
Mess Hall	12	1936	Contributing	D
Mess Hall	28	1941	Contributing	D
Mess Hall	29	1941	Contributing	D
<i>Recreational Facilities</i>				
Recreation Hall	48	1937	Contributing	D
Outdoor Swimming Pool ^a	49	1936	Contributing	D
<i>Firing Range</i>				
Rifle Firing Range	FR12	1924	Contributing	B
<i>Water Storage and Distribution Structures</i>				
Pump House ^a	84	1927	Contributing	B
<i>Transportation-Related Facilities</i>				
Pedestrian Underpass	50	1934	Contributing	D
Bridge	92	1940	Contributing	B
Bridge	113	1938	Contributing	D
<i>Other Buildings/Structures</i>				
Golden Gun Club Clubhouse ^b	104	1941	Noncontributing	B

a. The Outdoor Swimming Pool and the Pump House are no longer in existence.

b. The Golden Gun Club Clubhouse was lost to fire in July 2009.

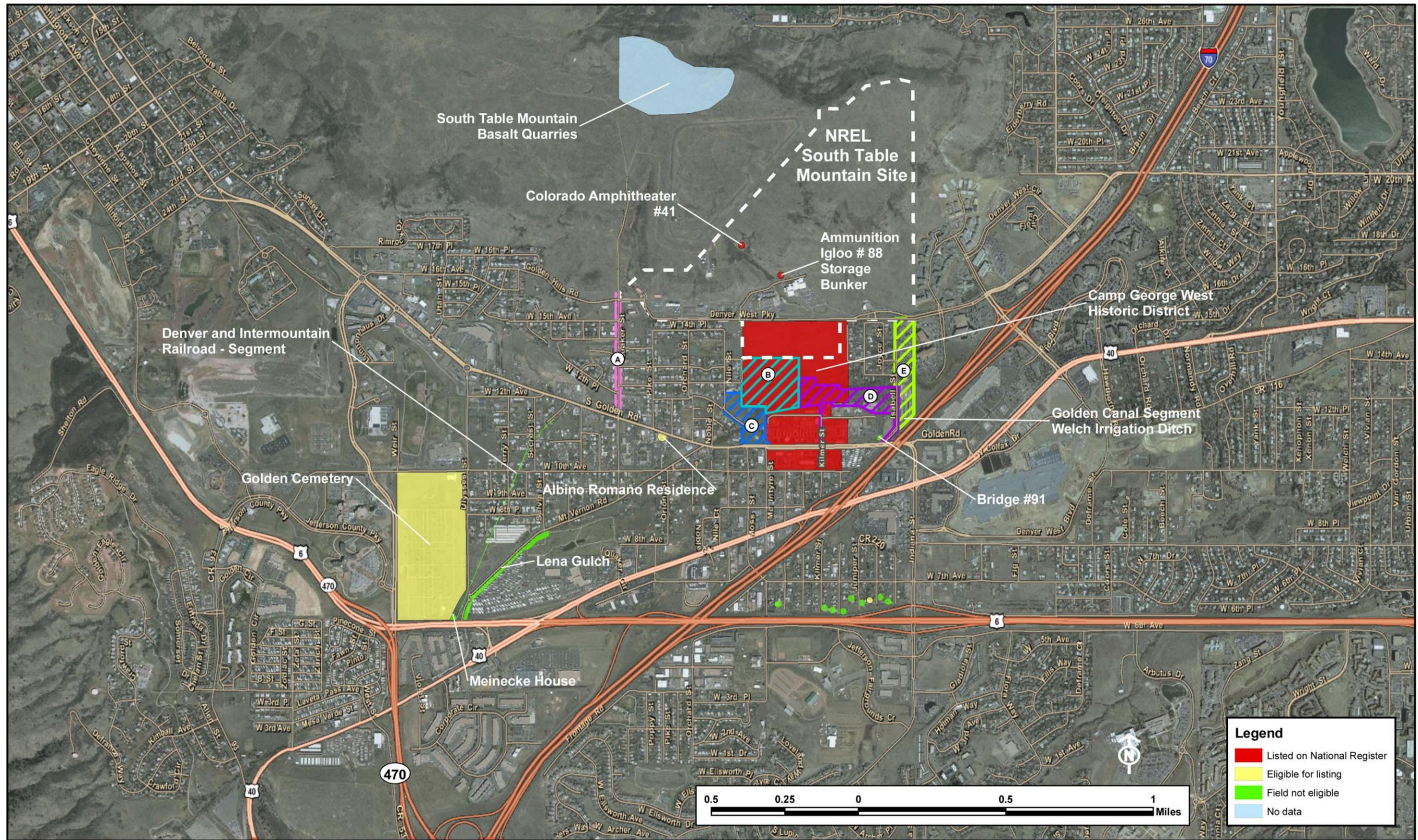


Figure D-1. Historic Resources within or near the Proposed Corridors for a Second Full Service Access Road to the NREL's South Table Mountain Site

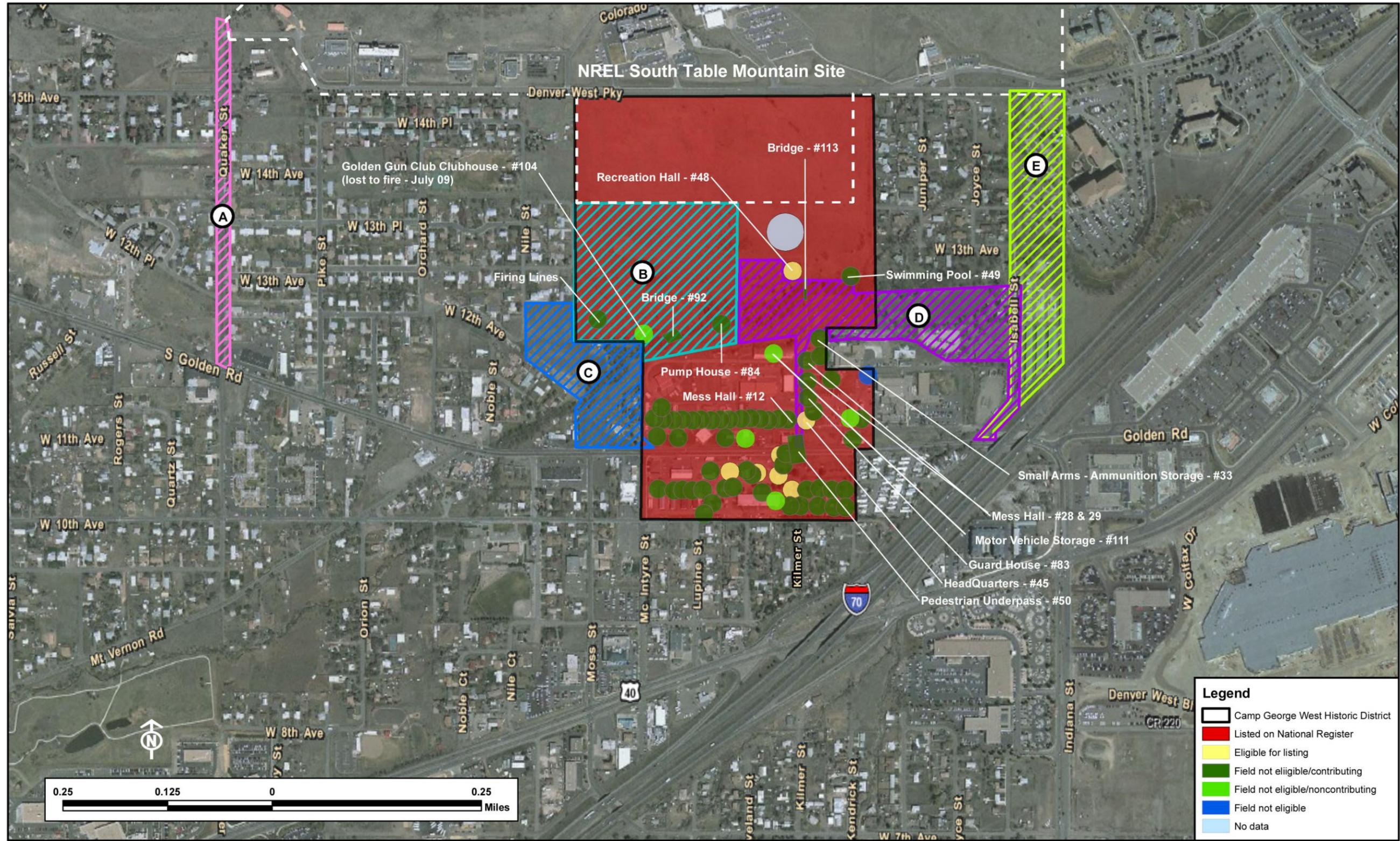


Figure D-2. Camp George West Historic Resources within or near the Proposed Corridors for a Second Full Service Access Road to the NREL's South Table Mountain Site

Administrative and General Support Buildings

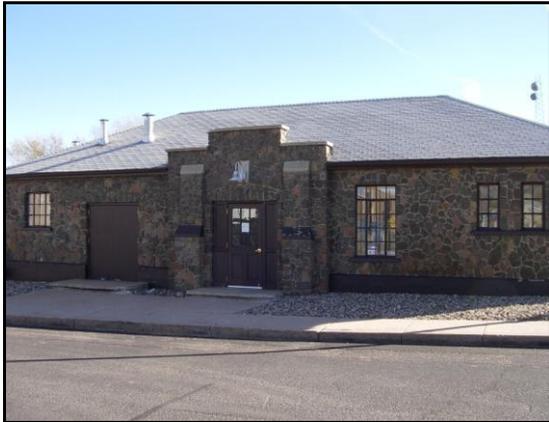
Building 45—Headquarters (1937)

A focal point of the post is the headquarters building erected in 1937 with funding from the WPA. The building was designed by George H. Merchant to employ as many hours of labor as possible in its construction, thereby providing employment for public relief workers. Included in the design were a complex roofline, many windows, and several wall projections. The one-story split fieldstone building has a central bay with a steeply pitched roof intersected on each end by roof wings. The central bay has a low, shed-roofed projecting façade presenting the building's central entrance. Above the entrance is a pediment arch that is stuccoed and decorated with the state seal. The entrance is flanked by a pair of casement windows with concrete sills. Flanking these are large 16-pane windows.



Headquarters (Building 45)

At the corners of the main bay are engaged stone pilasters. In 1956, a frame addition was added to the eastern wing of the building. The main entrance has been remodeled, as have entrances on the east and west wings.



Guardhouse (Building 83)

Building 83—Guardhouse (1940)

The guardhouse was one of the WPA-funded projects which erected major administrative and support buildings around the central quadrangle of the post. George H. Merchant designed the building to employ a maximum amount of labor through the inclusion of numerous windows and wall projections. The one-story, randomly coursed, split stone building has a pitched roof. A central, slightly projecting entrance features a stepped parapet with cast cement coping. Flanking the entrance are engaged stone pilasters with cast cement trim. Stonework above the entrance opening forms a slight arch. Windows are multi-pane casements with cast sills. The building has a raised concrete foundation, which has been painted. The original main entrance has been enclosed and has a window. The east elevation has an enclosed entrance bay with nonhistoric siding.

Equipment and Supply Storage Facilities

Building 33—Small Arms/Ammunition Storage (1925)

This one-story rectangular frame building has tongue-and-groove siding and a gabled roof with overhanging eaves and exposed rafters. The northern elevation has a central sliding wooden door that opens onto a small loading dock and is flanked by small multi-pane windows. A second sliding door is on the west. Windows are mostly six-pane with wood trim. One window on the east elevation has been replaced with a metal vent.



Small Arms/Ammunition Storage (Building 33)

Building 111—Motor Vehicle Storage (1953)

Built in 1953, after the period of significance (1903 to 1945), Building 111 was constructed north and west of the Headquarters and Guardhouse. This quonset-hut-style building has been designated a noncontributing resource, meaning it lacks any associations, qualities, or values that would contribute to the significance of the Camp George West Historic District.



Motor Vehicle Storage (Building 111)

Residences, Cantonment Structures, and Troop Support Buildings

Building 12—Mess Hall (1936)

This building is one of 11 remaining of 17 mess halls built during the period 1936-1941 on the post. It is representative of the current appearance of the buildings. This mess hall is a one-story front gable building with overhanging eaves. The lower portion of the building to sill height is composed of quarried basaltic stone rubblework; the upper walls are frame, now covered with nonhistoric siding over the original horizontal tongue-and-groove siding. The building has central entrances on gable end walls. The south entrance originally had double doors but now has a single door. Side elevations had central doors that are now covered up. Original six-pane windows have been replaced with sliding windows. Original corrugated iron roofing has been replaced with shingle roofing.



Mess Hall (Building 12)

Buildings 28 and 29—Mess Halls (1941)

The basic design of these mess halls, built approximately 5 years after Building 12, was essentially the same as the design for Building 12. However, the stone masonry on the lower portion of these buildings is more polygonal, with the stones quarried to a flatter surface.



Mess Hall (Building 28)



Mess Hall (Building 29)

Recreational Facilities

Building 48—Recreation Hall (1937)

This one-story building was designed to accommodate leisure-time activities of Guardsmen as a WPA public works relief project. The walls of the building are composed of fieldstone set with wide mortar seams. The cross-gabled roof has widely overhanging eaves, decorative beams, and exposed rafters. A projecting, gabled, central entrance bay is flanked by wraparound porches with stone pillar supports and walls. Over the entrance is a flat stone lintel. All windows have multiple panes (six or eight) and cast cement sills. The interior features a large fieldstone fireplace. The building has nonhistoric doors, the windows have metal grills, and a portion of the porch has been enclosed.



Recreation Hall (Building 48)

Structure 49—Outdoor Swimming Pool (1936)

The concrete outdoor swimming pool is no longer in existence; in its place is a wetland. The pool, built as a public works relief project, was a 50- by 90-foot rectangle that varied in depth from 3 feet on the western shallow end to 8 feet on the eastern end. The edge of the pool was surrounded by a narrow wall approximately 18 inches high, which was topped by a flat concrete top. An L-shaped concrete bench was located northwest of the pool. The pool originally had a diving board in the center of the east end and metal access ladders adjacent to the diving board and at the northeast and southeast corners. The pool was enclosed by a chain link fence.



Wetland occupying the original location of the outdoor swimming pool (Structure 49)

Firing Range

Structure FR12—Rifle Firing Range (1924)

Located northwest of the principal concentration of buildings at Camp George West, on the western edge of the installation, the lines of the firing range are oriented east-west and consist of a 600-yard line (farthest to the south), a 500-yard line, a 300-yard line, and a 200-yard line (farthest to the north). The lines are constructed of concrete, approximately 340 feet long and 1 foot wide, flush with the ground on the side of the shooter and about a foot above the ground on the side of the target. The 600-yard line is intact; the remaining three are missing segments where a dirt road and/or channelized drainage cuts through the lines. The rifle range was utilized during summer encampments of the Colorado National Guard during the 1920s and 1930s. During World War II, the 757th Military Police Battalion used the range.



Rifle Firing Range (FR12)

Water Storage and Distribution Structures

Structure 84—Pump House (1927)

The pump house is no longer in existence. The pump house was a small, wedge-shaped, one-story frame structure with drop siding and a shed roof that extended to the ground. It had a stone foundation and a central door constructed of vertical boards. By the 1980s, the structure was in an advanced state of deterioration (Front Range Research Associates 1992b).

Transportation-Related Facilities

Structure 50—Pedestrian Underpass (1934)

A Civil Works Administration project completed this pedestrian tunnel under South Golden Road and the Denver and Inter-Mountain railroad tracks to connect the northern and southern portions of the camp. The concrete-lined passageway consists of steps and a tunnel with sloping floors toward a level midsection. Entrances on either end are wedge-shaped and composed of split fieldstone. Stone posts with pyramidal tops stand at the corners of the entry and extend beyond the roofline. The roof is slightly curved and covered with a thin layer of concrete. The entrance on the southern end is open, while the one on the north is covered with a metal door and siding.



Pedestrian Underpass (Structure 50)



Bridge (Structure 92)

Structure 92—Bridge (1940)

This bridge over Lena Gulch was built as part of the WPA project to improve the post and provided easier access to the northwest quadrant of the camp and firing range. The one-lane bridge has a reinforced flat concrete deck and a 10-foot roadway with a 3-foot sidewalk on the east. The span of the bridge is 14 feet. The bridge abutments are composed of roughly split basaltic stone laid in courses. The side walls of the bridge are flared, rounded, and tapered and have a top layer of concrete.



Bridge (Structure 113)

Structure 113—Bridge (1938)

This two-lane bridge in the north-central section of Camp George West was constructed in 1938 as a WPA project. The bridge separately spans Lena Gulch and an unnamed tributary to that stream. It has a reinforced concrete slab deck and split fieldstone abutments with thick mortar. The roadway is 20 feet wide with stone walls higher toward the center of the bridge, where the land drops off beneath. A layer of projecting fieldstones is cemented to the top of the bridge walls, and metal railings flank the bridge deck. The total length of the bridge and its approaches is approximately 140 feet.

Other Buildings/Structures

Building 104—Golden Gun Club Clubhouse (1941)

This small one-story gabled building was composed of hand-made concrete blocks with decorative rocks embedded in them in decorative patterns. The building was not built by the military, and the National Guard did not take possession of the building until 1948; therefore, it does not meet the requirements for a contributing resource within the district. This building was destroyed by fire the weekend of July 25-26, 2009.



Golden Gun Club Clubhouse (Building 104)



Golden Gun Club Clubhouse - lost to fire (July 2009)

References

NRHP (National Register of Historic Place), 2008. COLORADO – Jefferson County – Historic Districts, online at <http://www.historicdistricts.com/co/Jefferson/districts.html>.

Front Range Research Associates, 1992a. National Register of Historic Places, Multiple Property Documentation Form, September 1, 1992, online at <http://www.nr.nps.gov/multiples/64500062.pdf>.

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