

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determination for individual properties and districts. See instruction in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Land Utilization Program (LUP) Headquarters

other names/site number Briggsdale Work Center; 5WL.1591

2. Location

street & number 44741 Weld County Road 77 [N/A] not for publication

city or town Briggsdale [X] vicinity

state Colorado code CO county Weld code 123 zip code 80611

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this [X] nomination [] request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property [] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant [] nationally [X] statewide [] locally. ([] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property [] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. ([] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer Date

Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, Colorado Historical Society
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

- [] entered in the National Register [] See continuation sheet.
[] determined eligible for the National Register [] See continuation sheet.
[] determined not eligible for the National Register.
[] removed from the National Register [] See continuation sheet.
[] other, explain [] See continuation sheet.

Four horizontal lines for signature and date input.

Land Utilization Program Headquarters
Name of Property

Weld County/Colorado
County/State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not count previously listed resources.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
3	3	buildings
1	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
4	3	Total

Name of related multiple property listing.
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

New Deal Resources of Colorado's Eastern Plains

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Function

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/ Single Dwelling

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/ Agricultural Outbuilding

GOVERNMENT

LANDSCAPE/ Conservation Area

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT

LANDSCAPE/ Conservation Area

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

NO STYLE

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls WOOD

roof SYNTHETICS/ Vinyl

other WOOD/ Shingle

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Land Utilization Program Headquarters
Name of Property

Weld County/Colorado
County/State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

CONSERVATION
 POLITICS/ GOVERNMENT
 LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Periods of Significance

1936-1941

Significant Dates

1936-1941

Significant Person(s)

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above).

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Resettlement Administration (RA)
 Works Progress Administration (WPA)
 Kent, L.R.

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Colorado Historical Society

Land Utilization Program Headquarters
Name of Property

Weld County/Colorado
County/State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 6.47

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

- | | | | | |
|----|------|---------|----------|---------|
| 1. | 13 | 556 205 | 4499 951 | (NAD27) |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing | |
| 2. | | | | |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing | |
| 3. | | | | |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing | |
| 4. | | | | |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing | |

The UTM's were derived by the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation from heads up digitization on Digital Raster Graphic (DRG) maps provided to OAHP by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management.

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Abigail Christman, Survey Coordinator (for property owner)
organization Colorado Preservation, Inc. date 2/22/2009
street & number 333 W. Colfax Avenue, Suite 300 telephone 303-893-4260
city or town Denver state CO zip code 80204

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional Items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name USDA Forest Service, Pawnee National Grasslands (Sue Struthers, contact)
street & number 2150 Centre Avenue, Building E telephone 970-295-6600
city or town Fort Collins state CO zip code 80526-8119

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to range from approximately 18 hours to 36 hours depending on several factors including, but not limited to, how much documentation may already exist on the type of property being nominated and whether the property is being nominated as part of a Multiple Property Documentation Form. In most cases, it is estimated to average 36 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form to meet minimum National Register documentation requirements. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, 1849 C St., NW, Washington, DC 20240.

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Land Utilization Program Headquarters
Weld County, Colorado

Section number 7 Page 1

New Deal Resources on Colorado's Eastern Plains MPS

DESCRIPTION

The Land Utilization Program Headquarters is located in northern Weld County, one mile north of Briggsdale. The headquarters is accessed from Weld County Road 77, which runs along the east side of the site. There is a small parking area at the southeast corner of the site. North of the parking area there is a dirt and gravel drive. A cattle guard is located at the entrance. The drive extends westwards, with a loop around the shop/warehouse. The headquarters currently serves as an administrative site for the Pawnee National Grasslands.

Located on a largely treeless, short grass prairie, the most prominent feature of the site is its landscaping. A shelterbelt extends across the northern boundary of the site. A row of trees also runs parallel to the road between the shelterbelt and site entrance. The house is surrounded by linearly arranged trees on four sides, forming a windbreak. Additional trees are scattered around the site.

There are three contributing buildings on the site: a house at the southeast corner, facing the road, a shop/warehouse building located to the rear, and a garage to the northwest of the house. There are three non-contributing buildings: a cellar constructed at an unknown date and a pumphouse and trailer added in the 1980s. The headquarters site, including the shelterbelt and other plantings, is considered one site.

Contributing Resources

Land Utilization Program Headquarters site, 1936-1941

The Land Utilization Program Headquarters (LUP HQ) site is located on an abandoned homestead, purchased from L.R. Kent in 1936. The LUP staff planned the site landscaping. The Works Progress Administration (WPA) provided manual labor. The most significant elements of the landscape design are the shelterbelt and the windbreak surrounding the dwelling. There is also a storage yard at the west end of the site. The landscaping reflects New Deal efforts to promote soil conservation through the selection of vegetation appropriate to the semi-arid climate and the use of plantings as shelter from the high winds of the prairie. The LUP HQ site gave staff an opportunity to experiment with these ideas and to create a demonstration landscape for the education of local ranchers and farmers.

There are two shelterbelts located on the northern edge of the site. The first is oriented east-west. It starts approximately 40 feet west of CR 77 and extends roughly 320 feet to the west. It is 65 feet wide and consists of five rows of plantings. A row of tall Chinese elm deciduous trees is located at the center. Rows of shrubs are located on either side of the elms with rows of conifers on the outside. The second shelterbelt sits at an angle to the first. It starts about 20 feet to the west of the first shelterbelt and extends diagonally to the southwest. This shelterbelt is roughly 230 feet long and 50 feet wide. It is composed of three rows of plantings. A mix of deciduous trees, conifers, and shrubs creates the windbreak around the house.

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House, 1927 (Photographs 1, 14, 15, 16, 24)

The house is located on the eastern side of the site, facing the road. According to a 1935 appraisal, L.R. Kent constructed the house in 1927. The estimated construction cost of the house was \$3,000; it was valued at \$2,400 in 1935. When the Resettlement Administration (RA) purchased the farm in 1936, it converted the house to an administrative office. However, it also appears to have continued to house staff as well.

The rectangular plan house is frame with a concrete foundation. It measures 24' x 42'. The 1½ story house includes two attic bedrooms and a full basement. A front-gabled roof, sheathed in wood shingles, covers the house. Triangular wooden brackets decorate the roofline on the gable ends. Single-story, hipped roof, full-width porches are located on the east and west sides. A red-brick chimney exists on the gable ridge. Vinyl siding sheathes the dwelling. One-over-one aluminum-frame sash windows replaced the original windows at an unknown date.

On the east facade, the original porch was enclosed. The original porch was gabled and only extended halfway across the facade. It sheltered the entrance, which was off-center on the south side of the facade. Wood posts, which rested on a low, wood-framed wall enclosing the porch, supported the roof. At some point the porch was extended across the facade, the gable roof was replaced with a hipped roof, and the entire porch area was enclosed with framing to create additional interior space. The exact date of these alterations is unknown; photographs indicate this occurred between 1940 and 1961. A flight of five concrete steps lined by a simple wood railing leads to the slightly off center front door. A pair of windows is located south of the entrance with a single window to the north. A pair of windows exists above the entrance on the gable end.

The south side features two pair of windows on the main section of the building. Paired windows are also located on the west sides of the front and rear porches. The windows on the rear porch are shorter than the other windows. There are vertical bands of windows on the basement level. The north side features a single window and a paired window, both on the main section of the building. Two small windows are located on the basement level.

An original enclosed porch is also located on the west side. The rear entry door is set slightly off center. A flight of five concrete steps lined by a simple wood railing leads up to the rear entrance. A band of four windows appears to the south of the rear entrance. Two single windows are located to the north of the entrance. A paired window is centered on the gable end.

In 1953 the United States Forest Service acquired the site and in 1960 reformation of the LUP lands into the Pawnee National Grasslands occurred. Since then, Pawnee National Grasslands staff has used the headquarters. The house served as temporary housing for Forest Service employees, primarily seasonal staff. In the interior, there is a bedroom and a kitchen on the north side of the dwelling and a living room on the south side with two bedrooms upstairs. The interior retains its original moldings and doors. Carpet covers the original wood floors.

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Shop (Barn)/Warehouse, 1927 and c.1936-1937 (Photographs 2, 13, 17, 18, 19, 20, 25)

This building consists of a barn built by L.R. Kent (on the east) and a warehouse added by the LUP (on the west). According to the 1935 appraisal, L.R. Kent constructed a 40' x 24' horse barn in 1927. The estimated construction cost of the barn was \$600; it was valued at \$420 in 1935. The LUP converted this barn into a machine shop after acquiring the site.

The 1½ story shop (barn) building measures 40' x 24'. An attic loft extends the full length of the building. Horizontal wood siding clads the frame building that rests on a concrete foundation. Corrugated metal roofing sheets cover the side gable roof. A metal ventilator is located on the gable ridge. The main entrance to the shop is through double doors centered on the south side. Another single-width door is located on the east end of the south side. There are four original wood-framed, fixed, 4-light windows on the south side—two on either side of the main entrance. Three solar panels have been attached to the western end of the south wall, on either side of and beneath the windows. The east side features two, wood-framed, fixed, 4-light windows on the main level and a single window on the gable end. A single door opening is located on the north side.

The interior has various storage cabinets and a workspace. Some LUP records refer to it as a blacksmith shop. The Forest Service currently stores supplies and equipment in the building.

The single-story, rectangular-plan, warehouse measures 50' x 24' and rests on a concrete foundation. Wood shingles painted white cover the exterior walls while corrugated metal roofing sheets cover the side gabled roof. A metal ventilator is located on the gable ridge. The south facade is divided into six bays. Entrance to the warehouse is through hanging garage-style doors. The western portion of the warehouse contains open storage space for vehicles or other machinery; a workshop area is located on the east end of the warehouse. A single window opening exists on the west side with one single and one paired window opening on the north side. Boards cover all window openings. The LUP, likely using WPA labor, constructed it soon after establishing the headquarters in 1936. It is mentioned in newspaper articles from 1937 describing the headquarters complex.

Garage, c. 1937-1941 (Photographs 2, 21, 22)

The LUP added the garage to the headquarters sometime between 1937 and 1941. It is not mentioned in the 1935 appraisal or 1937 newspaper descriptions of the headquarters. The garage is first mentioned in a description of the headquarters from a 1941 LUP report.

The rectangular plan, single-story garage measures 16' x 20'. The frame building rests on a concrete foundation. A front-gabled roof sheathed in wood shingles covers the garage. Sliding barn-style doors composed of vertical boards extend across the south side. Two square window openings exist on the west side; one has boards over it while the other contains a two-light wood-frame window.

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Non-contributing Resources

Cellar, c.1941-1961 (Photographs 21, 23)

The construction date of the cellar is unknown. The cellar is not mentioned in the 1935 appraisal of the Kent Farm or the later descriptions of the LUP HQ. The lack of mention suggests that the cellar was most likely constructed between 1941 and 1961. The first mention of the cellar is in Forest Service records from 1961.

The cellar measures 13.5' x 25' with a 13.5' x 21' ramp. The foundation and walls of the cellar are constructed of concrete. The roof is concrete covered with sod with exposed rafter tails. The concrete ramp is covered by a frame structure clad in horizontal wood siding.

Pumphouse, constructed 1980 (Photograph 16)

The Forest Service constructed the pumphouse in 1980 to pump well water. The square plan 8.5' x 8.5' frame building rests on a concrete foundation. Metal siding covers the exterior. Wood shingles sheathe the front gabled roof.

Trailer, 1980 (Photograph 2)

The Forest Service added the mobile trailer to the site in 1980. The rectangular trailer is covered with metal sheeting. The roof is also metal.

Integrity

Though changes have occurred to the headquarters complex since 1941 (the end of the period of significance), it retains the integrity necessary to convey its significance. The designed landscape, the most significant feature of the site, retains a high degree of integrity. This landscape clearly demonstrates the conservation efforts of the LUP and New Deal programs in general. The landscape is also the only feature of the site that reflects a New Deal design. The buildings on the site are purely functional in nature, and most were repurposed from abandoned homestead buildings. Several buildings were already on the site when it was acquired for use as the LUP HQ. According to LUP files, additional buildings were moved from other abandoned farms in the area or built using materials reclaimed from these farms.

The buildings most strongly identified with the LUP HQ are intact: the house (which served as the LUP office) and the shop/warehouse (the largest building and centrally located on the site). A garage added by the LUP is also intact. A variety of other outbuildings were also once located on the site: a granary, gas house, carpenter shop, shed, bunkhouse, and engineer's office. The existence of these other buildings is known through records of the LUP and Forest Service. However, no historic site maps have been located, so the exact location of the buildings on the site is unknown. The LUP added only three of the missing buildings--the gas house, carpenter shop, and engineer's office--to the site. The granary was a remnant of the Kent Farm the Forest Service removed in 1967. The shed and bunkhouse were on the site when the Forest Service acquired it in 1953, but their origin is uncertain. These buildings do not appear on the 1935 appraisal of the Kent Farm, in 1937 newspaper descriptions of the

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new LUP headquarters or in a 1941 description of the headquarters in a LUP report, suggesting they were added to the site after 1941 and the end of the period of significance.

While the loss of the engineer's office, carpenter shop, and gas house is unfortunate, these ancillary buildings, added to the site between 1937 and 1941, are not essential to conveying the historical associations of the LUP with the site. The engineer's office was a secondary office-the primary office for the headquarters was located in the house. The LUP moved the single-room engineer's office to the headquarters in 1938. The carpenter shop and gas house also likely were moved to the site from the abandoned homesteads WPA laborers cleared or constructed with materials reclaimed from these homesteads.

The LUP HQ is the most intact surviving site tied to the work of the RA, SCS, and FSA in eastern Colorado. Though the work of these agencies had a tremendous impact on the landscape of eastern Colorado, no other office or camp complexes survive. Similar to the LUP HQ, offices and camps were intended to be temporary and consisted either of simple facilities that could be built as quickly and cheaply as possible or existing buildings converted to a new function. The LUP HQ is also the only identified shelterbelt located in eastern Colorado known to have been designed and planted as part of a New Deal program.

The plantings in the shelterbelts all appear to be original, and there has been some loss to the original landscaping over the years due to the death of some trees and shrubs. However, the landscaping design and plan is still clearly evident and intact.

The non-contributing buildings do not significantly detract from the integrity of the LUP HQ. The cellar has a low profile and fits with the character of the site. The pumphouse is small and located inconspicuously behind the house. The trailer is a temporary structure located on the northern edge of the site.

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SIGNIFICANCE

The Land Utilization Program Headquarters, established by the Resettlement Administration in 1935, is being nominated under the *New Deal Resources on Colorado's Eastern Plains* Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF). The Land Utilization Program Headquarters meets the registration requirements of the property type delineated in the MPDF: Conservation Resource, subtype: Soil Conservation Resource.

The Land Utilization Program (LUP) Headquarters meets Criterion A in the area of **Politics/Government** for its association with President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal legislative agenda to rescue the United States from the Great Depression. The LUP Headquarters is associated with several New Deal agencies including the Resettlement Administration (RA), the Farm Security Administration (FSA), and Soil Conservation Service (SCS). It represents a major shift in government policy relating to land use and agriculture. After decades of encouraging settlement of the Plains and giving away land through the Homestead Acts, under the Resettlement Administration the government began to buy back land it determined unsuitable for farming. These New Deal agencies marked the beginning of much greater government involvement in agricultural practice and policy including loans, subsidies, educational programs, and controlled grazing on government lands.

Additionally, the LUP Headquarters meets Criterion A in the area of **Conservation**. The LUP was one of many New Deal programs developed to deal with the Dust Bowl crisis. These programs sought to reverse the damage overgrazing, dryland farming, erosion, and dust caused to the Plains. The LUP was part of a comprehensive soil conservation program administered through several New Deal agencies. The conservation program included the withdrawing marginal lands from crop production, preventing wind erosion with shelterbelts, restoring windblown and overgrazed lands through reseeding native grasses, and controlling grazing. The shelterbelt at the LUP Headquarters, as well as the LUP's work restoring surrounding lands, functioned as a demonstration of soil conservation practices for private landowners in the area.

Finally, the LUP Headquarters meets Criterion C in the area of **Landscape Architecture** as a rare intact example of a landscape New Deal conservationists designed. The headquarters served as a demonstration landscape, exhibiting the conservation philosophy of the Soil Conservation Service (SCS). It is a representation on a small scale of efforts to restore the land throughout northeastern Weld County, both through direct land rehabilitation projects as well as through education. The LUP chose all plantings at the headquarters for their suitability to semi-arid conditions. The two shelterbelts planted represent one of the primary methods New Deal conservations promoted to fight wind erosion.

The period of significance begins in 1936 with the establishment of the LUP Headquarters and ends in 1941. The headquarters is significant on a state level as the only remaining headquarters complex of the Resettlement Administration's Land Utilization Program in Colorado. It is a rare surviving representation of the Farm Security Administration work and

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Soil Conservation Service in eastern Colorado. Both the Land Utilization Program and the Soil Conservation Service played a major role in shaping the future of land use across Colorado's plains. In 1941 the LUP completed land purchases in the original project and staff at the headquarters was reduced. The focus of the LUP moved to a new headquarters site near Buckingham, where the government was purchasing additional land.

Historical Background

During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, government policy focused on settling the plains. Under the 1862 Homestead Act, the government distributed land in 160-acre parcels. By the early twentieth century homesteaders had claimed the prime land, leaving only marginal drylands. The Enlarged Homestead Act in 1909 recognized the difficulty of farming in these areas and encouraged continued settlement by expanding parcels to 320 acres. The Plains population boomed in the 1920s. Wheat fields replaced native grasses and pastures were overgrazed. When drought hit in the 1930s, there was nothing to hold the fine topsoil in place, resulting in the severe erosion and dust storms of the 1930s. Agricultural experts who met to discuss the Dust Bowl crisis in Pueblo, Colorado, in 1935 estimated that winds had blown 850 million tons of topsoil off the South Plains that year. The Roosevelt administration created a series of New Deal programs including the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA), Resettlement Administration (RA), Farm Security Administration (FSA), and Soil Conservation Service (FSC) to address the environmental crisis and change land use in eastern Colorado. One method of achieving this was through the LUP. (Some sources refer to the Program as the Land Utilization Project. However, they are the same).

Establishment of the Land Utilization Program

Under the Roosevelt administration, the homesteading movement President Lincoln had initiated came to a halt. With the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, the government closed remaining public lands to homesteaders. This land in the arid and semi-arid West was suffering due to overgrazing and dryland farming techniques. New Dealers determined too many people were trying to make a living on too little land, so no more settlement would be allowed in these marginal areas. Additionally, the act authorized the Interior Department to establish grazing districts and manage a grazing permit system.

Established in 1934, the LUP was one of a range of New Deal programs intended to help alleviate rural poverty and restore the economic vitality of the agricultural industry. The program's creators argued that rural poverty was tied to soil erosion. They believed the loan defaults, tax delinquency, and farm failures were the result of misguided settlement patterns and improper land use rather than individual failure. Through the LUP the government purchased submarginal and eroded lands, restored them, and then converted them to grazing, forestry, wildlife or recreation areas. According to President Roosevelt, "Many million acres of such land must be returned to grass or trees if we are to prevent a new and man-made Sahara" (This Land 112).

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The Federal Relief and Recovery Agency (FERA) directed LUP initially. In 1935 it was relocated to the newly established Resettlement Administration (RA). The RA was given the power to purchase land, resettle farmers from poor lands to better lands, carry out conservation and land restoration projects, and provide loans. The RA had three divisions: Land Utilization, Resettlement, and Rehabilitation. Land Utilization was responsible for the purchasing of land, Resettlement was responsible for organizing new lands for those bought out, and Rehabilitation provided loans and technical assistance. In Colorado, the Land Utilization Division operated in the eastern part of the state in the semi-arid areas hit hard by Dust Storms and the accumulated effects of years of poor farming and ranching practices. The Resettlement Division had offices in the western part of the state including Grand Junction and Fruita, where the government relocated people to new farms to the Grand Valley Reclamation Project. The RA is a good example of the experimental nature of many New Deal programs with various policy makers given an opportunity to try out their ideas and determine what worked. A committee decided the appropriate use for the submarginal lands the government purchased; uses included agricultural rehabilitation, a recreational park, a wildlife preserve, or a Native American project. Some projects encompassed multiple uses such as the Weld County project, which was primarily devoted to agricultural rehabilitation but also included a recreation park and wildlife preserve. Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Camp enrollees and Work Progress Administration (WPA) laborers worked on land restoration and infrastructure improvements.

In 1937 the LUP was transferred to the FSA. In early 1938 the Bureau of Agricultural Economics took over the LUP and later the same year control was transferred to the SCS.

Shelterbelts

New Dealers promoted a variety of options to rescue the Plains states. Protection against wind erosion was a priority. Strong winds often removed several inches of topsoil from areas without groundcover and the drifting soil destroyed crops and grasses on adjacent lands. Tree planting was one of the chief methods implemented to fight wind erosion and improve living conditions. The next steps were restoration of ground cover (by either planting crops or reseeding native grasses) and improvements to tillage methods.

The Shelterbelt Project, also known as the Prairie States Forestry Project, focused planting efforts in areas from North Dakota south to Texas, with more than 200 million shelterbelt trees planted between 1935 and 1942. Established by Executive Order in July 1934, the Shelterbelt Project had the dual purpose of stopping wind erosion and providing employment.

Shelterbelts were planted as part of cooperative agreements between farmers and the federal government. Trees were planted in strips on individual farms, in a patchwork pattern oriented both north-south and east-west, usually along land survey lines. East-west plantings were more common since they protected against north and northeast winds in the winter. The standard design for windbreaks incorporated a mix of deciduous trees, conifers, and shrubs.

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Tall, fast-growing trees were generally placed in the center with slower growing trees and shrubs on either side. Common species included red cedar, ponderosa pine, green ash, hackberry, and elm. All were chosen for their ability to resist drought. The most common design was ten rows of trees, although shelterbelts ranged from three to twenty-one rows in width. The distance between rows was eight to ten feet. Trees were spaced six to eight feet apart and shrubs three to four feet apart. Shelterbelts were typically one-fourth to one-half mile in length but could be up to a mile long. Plants were grown from local seeds as much as possible.

Establishment of the Land Utilization Program Headquarters

In 1935 the RA began looking for a place to establish a headquarters for an LUP in Weld County. They selected the farm of L.R. Kent, located northwest of Briggsdale. Kent had acquired a farm of 160 acres in 1925 and added an additional 80 acres in 1930. Drought and dust storms apparently drove Kent to give up on farming the land, since LUP records describe it as "abandoned." An appraisal of the farm from 1935 lists four buildings: a house, horse barn, chicken house, and granary. According to the appraisal, the house, horse barn, and granary were constructed in 1927. The construction date for the chicken house was listed as 1920, predating Kent's acquisition of the property. Other property features listed on the appraisal included a well and mill, natural water holes, and fencing. The farm included 75 acres of crop land valued at \$3 per acre and 165 acres of grazing land valued at \$2.50 per acre. The government purchased the farm in 1936 for \$4,836.

By 1937 the Kent farmhouse had become a "fully equipped and modern office being operated industriously by a small but efficient office force." (*The Banner* [Briggsdale], 12/16/37). A.E. Hyde was the project manager. Four office staff, three engineers, a range rider, a warehouse and distributing clerk, and three WPA labor supervisors occupied the headquarters. The headquarters complex included "an electrically equipped carpenter and blacksmith shop, a large warehouse for general storage use, electric water system and storage yards." (*The Banner* [Briggsdale], 12/16/37).

In addition to serving as the operations base for federal land acquisition and restoration performed by the LUP, the headquarters served as the public face of the New Deal land programs. The Briggsdale paper reported that extensive information on the project was available to anyone visiting the administrative office, and that such a visit showed "very careful planning is being done to build up an economically sound program of future control of this area which will prove most beneficial to residents of the territory" (*The Banner* 12/9/37).

In December 1937 *The Banner* reported the landscaping of the headquarters grounds was "largely accomplished." WPA labor carried out much of the work including the planting of 25 Chinese elms and native shrubs. The LUP chose a native Buffalo sod lawn instead of the usual blue grass. According to the project manager the "buffalo sod makes a neat appearance, takes very little sprinkling and practically no mowing." (*The Banner*, 12/16/37). The LUP

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designed the headquarters landscaping to demonstrate the recommended plantings and techniques for the surrounding area. The plants were compatible with the local climate, soil, and rainfall levels. Additionally, it designed the plantings to aid in soil conservation efforts. While WPA laborers landscaped the LUP headquarters, they also landscaped a new recreational park established nearby on Crow Creek. For planting in the park, government laborers dug up and transplanted native trees and shrubs from along Crow Creek. Government laborers salvaged trees and shrubs from abandoned farmsteads in the project area as well as transplanting evergreens from forest lands. Most of the plantings used at the headquarters were obtained at the same time.

Financial records for the initial formation of the headquarters in 1936 and 1937 have not been located. Records from 1938 indicated the headquarters established during the previous two years was still being developed. There was a budget of \$4,635 in 1938 for WPA laborers working on the headquarters. This included the creation of an engineer's office in a building moved to the site from government purchased land. The remodeled building had a single room with the walls and ceiling covered in Celotex. Other projects included installing an irrigation system for the lawn and shrubs, completing the shop/warehouse building, and erecting telephone lines to connect the headquarters to the switchboard in Briggsdale.

The emphasis in the headquarters development was functionality and frugality. The LUP reused buildings already on the site when purchased, moved buildings from other homesteads purchased by the government or constructed new buildings using materials reclaimed from abandoned homesteads. WPA laborers carried out most of the work. According to LUP files, "only those structures essential to the neat appearance and efficient operation of a project have been built or are to be built at the project headquarters" (LUP files at NARA-Ft. Worth). By 1941 the headquarters included: an administration building, engineer's office, warehouse and general storeroom, machine and blacksmith shop, garages, Kohler light and power system, domestic water system, gas house, storage yard, and fencing.

The LUP in Weld County

The LUP in Weld County included the retirement of marginal farmlands through government purchase, the restoration of lands, encouragement of grazing over farming, and promotion of soil conservation methods. Before beginning land purchases, the LUP evaluated the condition of farmsteads and local soils. They also looked for the cause of the current agricultural crisis. Studies determined the average rainfall of 12 to 14 inches per year was not sufficient for the intensive dryland farming underway in Weld County. The government identified several factors leading to the crisis: the light, sandy soil of Weld County eroded easily and was not suitable for dryland farming methods used during the homesteading boom of the 1920s; the practice of 'tramp herding' or allowing livestock to graze on lands not owned by the grazer resulted in overgrazing; tax delinquencies and the abandonment of farming units; and the settlement of 160 acre units under the Homestead Act was not enough land for profitable livestock raising. According to a 1937 LUP report:

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Greed has caused the scourge of the 'suit-case farmers' who have plowed up large acreages for wheat, later to be abandoned; it has caused speculation in real estate that has ultimately resulted in excessive non-resident ownerships; it has caused through local pride and smooth promoters, many community services to be established such as roads and schools at unbearable costs; it has brought on nomad herds of sheep and cattle to utilize forage which might be used by residents of the area; it has caused over-grazing and over-cropping by residents who wanted a 'killing' and then move elsewhere or retire.

An LUP survey of local farm buildings evaluated the success of agriculture in the area. Of 517 houses, the report classified only 28 farmhouses as being in good condition. The LUP classified the majority of houses as fair and 133 were evaluated as poor. Hard times forced many to abandon their land; 207 houses were empty. There were also 51 sites where only the foundations of houses remained. Between 1927 and 1935, school enrollment in the area dropped by one half. The decline in population left remaining residents with an increased burden to pay for public services including schools. Tax delinquency was a significant problem.

The goal of the LUP was to "correct mal-adjustments in land-use and thereby effect an improvement in the economic condition of the land area represented" (LUP report 1941). In 1937, the LUP proposed to displace 183 of 580 local families through federal land purchases. The government sought to purchase all units that were less than 320 acres and at least 40 percent of farm units between 320 and 640 acres. Government plans included returning the purchased land to grazing, discouraging cash grain farming in the area, and encouraging the use of contour farming and crop rotation in the areas remaining in production for feed crops.

The government provided loans, grants, and assistance to help those displaced to resettle elsewhere. Those displaced could choose to either give up farming and take a government payment for their land, or accept government assistance with relocation. It moved the elderly to larger population centers such as Greeley. The FSA helped farmers find more suitable farmland, including irrigated tracts around Greeley and Fort Collins as well as on Colorado's western slope.

The LUP in Weld County consisted of two parts: the original project that purchased land north of Briggsdale and an expansion project (Site II) located 20 miles east of Briggsdale around Buckingham and New Raymer. By the beginning of 1938, the government had purchased or was in the process of acquiring 90,000 acres within the original project area of 300,000 acres. A.E. Hyde reported that in an area that once had 800 farmsteads, there were now 84 families. Hyde estimated the area might eventually be able to support about 100 families with each running about 150 head of cattle. Farming would not be eliminated, but would be reduced to growing the winter feed needed for cattle. After land rehabilitation in the original project area was well underway, the LUP began developing Site II. The project area covered approximately

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500,000 acres, though the government only planned to purchase 10 to 20 percent of the land in this area. As in the original project area, the focus of land purchases was on farms considered too small, mostly quarter and half sections, to operate efficiently.

Separate grazing associations managed the two sites: the Crow Valley Association managed the original project area and the Pawnee Grazing Association managed the second site. The LUP established a second "field" headquarters on an abandoned farmstead three miles northeast of Buckingham to serve Site II. In 1942 a Civilian Public Service camp, housing 30-50 conscientious objectors, was established at the field headquarters. The camp started due to the scarcity of civilian labor to complete the development work on Site II after the U.S. entered World War II. (Today only a few remnants of foundations mark the site of the field headquarters).

Land Rehabilitation

The LUP's goal was to restore the land it purchased and then return it to grazing pasture. It removed any houses, sheds, fences, and other improvements on the land that might interfere with grazing activities or encouraged people to return to the land in future years of high precipitation. The WPA worked with the LUP to provide labor for the land improvements.

Additionally, the LUP planted trees to provide shelter for livestock. By the summer of 1937, WPA workers had planted approximately 15,000 trees in northern Weld County. The workers planted groups of trees in areas where natural ground moisture was found to be continually available so the trees could be self-supporting within a few years. Locations included old lake beds, low lying lands adjacent to creek channels, near water holes, and near irrigation and small check dams. Some of these areas served a dual purpose as habitats for birds and other wildlife. According to an LUP report, "Wildlife conservation is gradually being promoted as a part of the community plan of controlled grazing. Such improvements to the lands as stock ponds, springs, deferred grazing areas and meadow developments serve as a substantial aid in wildlife development" (undated report at Pawnee National Grasslands office).

In 1938 work began on a \$45,048 project to improve lands in the eastern portion of the project area. This covered 122,880 acres and included both newly purchased government land and private land. (Records were not located for improvements to the western portion of the project.) Improvements, carried out by WPA laborers, included developing four springs, building two stock water wells, creating an impounding dam, building seven check dams and diversion structures, installing six cattle guards, erecting 18 miles of new fencing, and demolishing 92 miles of fencing. WPA laborers demolished 38 homesteads, removing buildings, filling in basements and wells, and cleaning up the homestead sites, while salvaging as much as possible to be stored at the headquarters for reuse. Workers also contoured 12,462 acres, reseeded 8,012 acres with crested wheatgrass, and planted 14 shelterbelts.

After completing the land restoration, the government opened the land to grazing. It aimed to

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maintain optimal use of the land by carefully controlling the number of cattle grazed. Rights to graze on federal lands were allotted to those within the project area based on the number of stock run before the project began, winter range and feed available to the applicant, and dependency upon the government range lands. The government charged 20 cents per animal per month for grazing. The county received 25 percent of the fees collected. Beyond the land it purchased, the LUP encouraged proper land use methods and the conservation of natural resources on the surrounding land. The government established joint management of federal and private lands under cooperative grazing associations.

Restoration and development work on the land, both to address the soil erosion and drought conditions and in order to provide jobs for the local community, proceeded quickly. By the summer of 1941, the LUP had impacted a total of 124,860 acres. This included: contour furrowing on range lands- 9,970 acres; land stabilization and reseeding- 9,970 acres; meadow improvements through check damming and flood water spreading- 585 acres; land set aside for wildlife conservation- 85,480 acres; land used for controlled grazing- 85,480 acres; and land temporarily withheld from grazing for land stabilization- 18,710 acres. However, the land still had a long way to go before it recovered from earlier abuses. Ranges were reported to be at 40 to 50 percent of normal due to the accumulated impact of drought, damage from plowing lands, dust blown onto grazing lands from adjacent farmlands, and severe overgrazing.

By 1941 the LUP achieved its goals of purchasing lands, restoring lands, and initiating a change in land use practices. The full recovery of the land depended on time and wise use. As a result, the LUP reduced staff and activities at the headquarters. An LUP report in July 1941 stated the LUP would no longer need much of the headquarters office space. It recommended the administration building become housing for project personnel since it was difficult to find suitable housing in Briggsdale or the surrounding area. The report recommended using the engineer's office as quarters for a caretaker or range rider.

Impact and Reception

The LUP had an immediate financial impact on northern Weld County. The federal government spent nearly one million dollars on Weld County's LUP. By the mid-1940s, the government had purchased 200,000 acres at an average cost of \$3 per acre totaling approximating \$600,000. The LUP spent approximately \$390,000 on land improvements including check dams, springs, range seeding, and stabilization. Much of this money went directly into the local community through worker salaries. The work restoring land provided a significant amount of employment to the local area. As an example, for work during the first half of November 1937, paychecks totaling \$4,000 were distributed to 111 families.

Additionally, under the LUP, the government created two recreational parks for the local community. At Owl Creek, the government set aside ten acres in agreement with the Owl Creek Community Church School. The government paid for the rehabilitation of the old school building on the site into a community hall and planted 600 trees. (Nothing remains today-the

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building was removed and the trees died.) North of Briggsdale the government set aside 40 acres to establish the Crow Valley Campground. The Forest Service currently manages the campground as part of the Pawnee National Grasslands.

Local response to the LUP ranged from gratefulness for government assistance to condemnation of government interference. According to an article in *The Banner*, "Since 1930 or longer it has been a tough job for both farmer and townspeople in this community to make ends meet. Therefore most residents still remaining realize what a tremendous help the Government Land project has been" (12/9/37). Some argued that only the government had the capability to address the scale of the current disaster, "Undoubtedly the buying of badly used lands in the Great Plains area is the only means for Government control in reclaiming large areas from dust storms, devastating land losses from erosion and general loss of soil fertility that is especially serious in the shallow soils of this region" (*The Banner*, 12/9/37). At a public meeting one local landowner declared "he had lived for 30 years in the area, seen his neighbors go half clothed, without proper food and housing for years and then, after having sunk all their funds, be forced to leave, 'broken in spirit and body'" (newspaper clipping 1/8/38). He believed the LUP land purchases were the only thing to keep the foolhardy from attempting to farm where only grazing was appropriate.

While some may not have initially agreed with government purchasing of land, they were convinced by the outcome. The LUP arranged tours of the project area to show improvements to the conditions. The Briggsdale paper reported that "those who have completed inspection of this work on the entire project claim results are of a sane and sound nature and far ahead of the conditions which existed before such work was done" (*The Banner*, 12/9/37). Others argued that the government could have achieved land use changes through other means, such as range control laws. Sheep growers declared the LUP project a "freeze out" of sheep ranching since the government refused grazing leases for sheep on the government lands. Some parents in rural areas opposed the LUP, afraid the government land purchases would result in the closure of rural schools, as there would be fewer residents and less tax revenue to support them.

In March 1939, the Crow Valley Association wrote a letter to United States Senator Edwin Johnson reporting on the success of the project:

We have elected to operate on a livestock production basis, rather than to continue to follow out the rather hazardous method of small cash crop farming. Most of our members have been primarily farmers but are very agreeable to changing their practices to a livestock basis, because most of us went broke trying to farm. It has been determined that most of the farms were too small. After a period of years, the soils have begun to blow, which has proved very detrimental to the pasture areas, as well as to the farmed lands. It has become apparent to most of us that some sort of a cooperative community control of the

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situation has been necessary. The Government's Land Utilization program has given us this kind of control, and most of those who live within the project area appreciate this fact. . . . Last year many of our members made good money, for the first time in 10 years. There were fewer cash crops grown and more feed crops than has been the case in years. . . . Because of the protection that has

been offered by the Government's Land Utilization Program, and by the Association's efforts, the members have been looking forward to the future (SCS records at NARA- Ft. Worth).

The government established similar LUP projects across the Northern Great Plains. The government eventually purchased more than 4.7 million acres of submarginal farmland and overgrazed rangeland. The land was rehabilitated and turned over to well-managed grazing. Through the local grazing associations managing the purchased lands jointly with other publicly and privately owned lands, the improved land use affected more than 30 million acres.

LUP since 1941

In 1953 the U.S. Department of Agriculture transferred the management of lands purchased under the LUP from the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) to the Forest Service. On June 20, 1960, reformation of LUP lands into the National Grasslands occurred. The Weld County LUP became the Pawnee National Grasslands.

The LUP headquarters remains in use with government employees managing the surrounding government lands. Renamed the Briggsdale Work Camp, the Forest Service removed several unneeded buildings from the headquarters site in the 1960s. The carpenter shop and bunkhouse were sold and moved in 1966. The granary was sold and moved in 1969. Today, the Forest Service uses the headquarters as a maintenance and storage site as well as providing occasional housing for seasonal employees. The Forest Service continues to manage grazing on the Grasslands.

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Management Plan for Northeast Colorado Land Utilization Project and Land Conservation Project

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CO-LU-21, Site 1, July 1941. Pawnee National Grasslands Records, Greeley, CO.

Management Plan for NE Colorado Land Utilization and Land Conservation Project CO-LU-21,
 Site 2, July 1943. Pawnee National Grasslands Records, Greeley, CO.

Preliminary Proposal for the NE Colorado Land Utilization Project, 1937. Arapaho & Roosevelt
 National Forests Service Office, Fort Collins, CO.

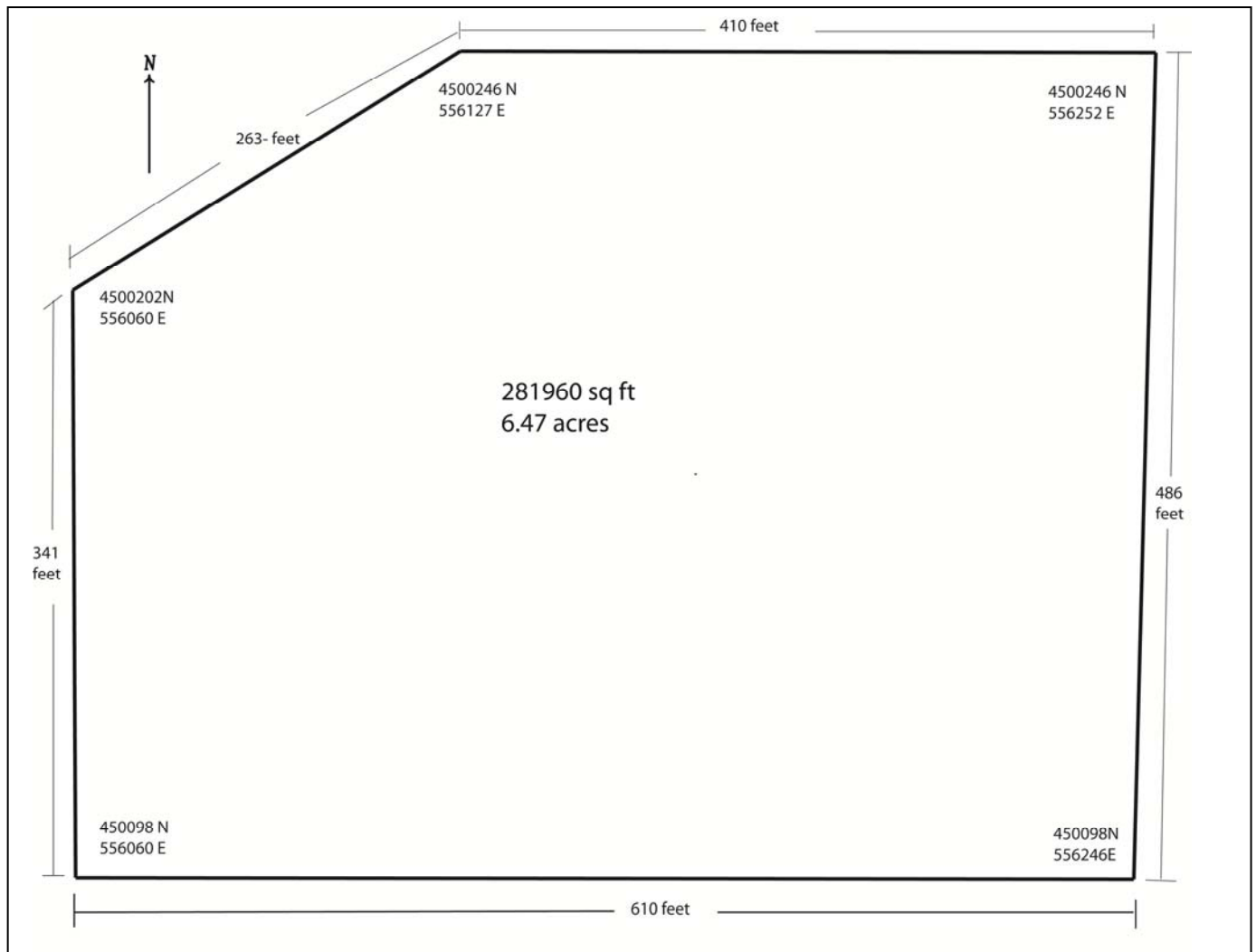
GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

From a point on the western side of the right-of-way of CR 77, the boundary extends 410 feet west, 263 feet southwest, 341 feet south, 610 feet east, and 486 feet north. See maps below.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary includes the site, all buildings, and landscape features associated with the headquarters complex.



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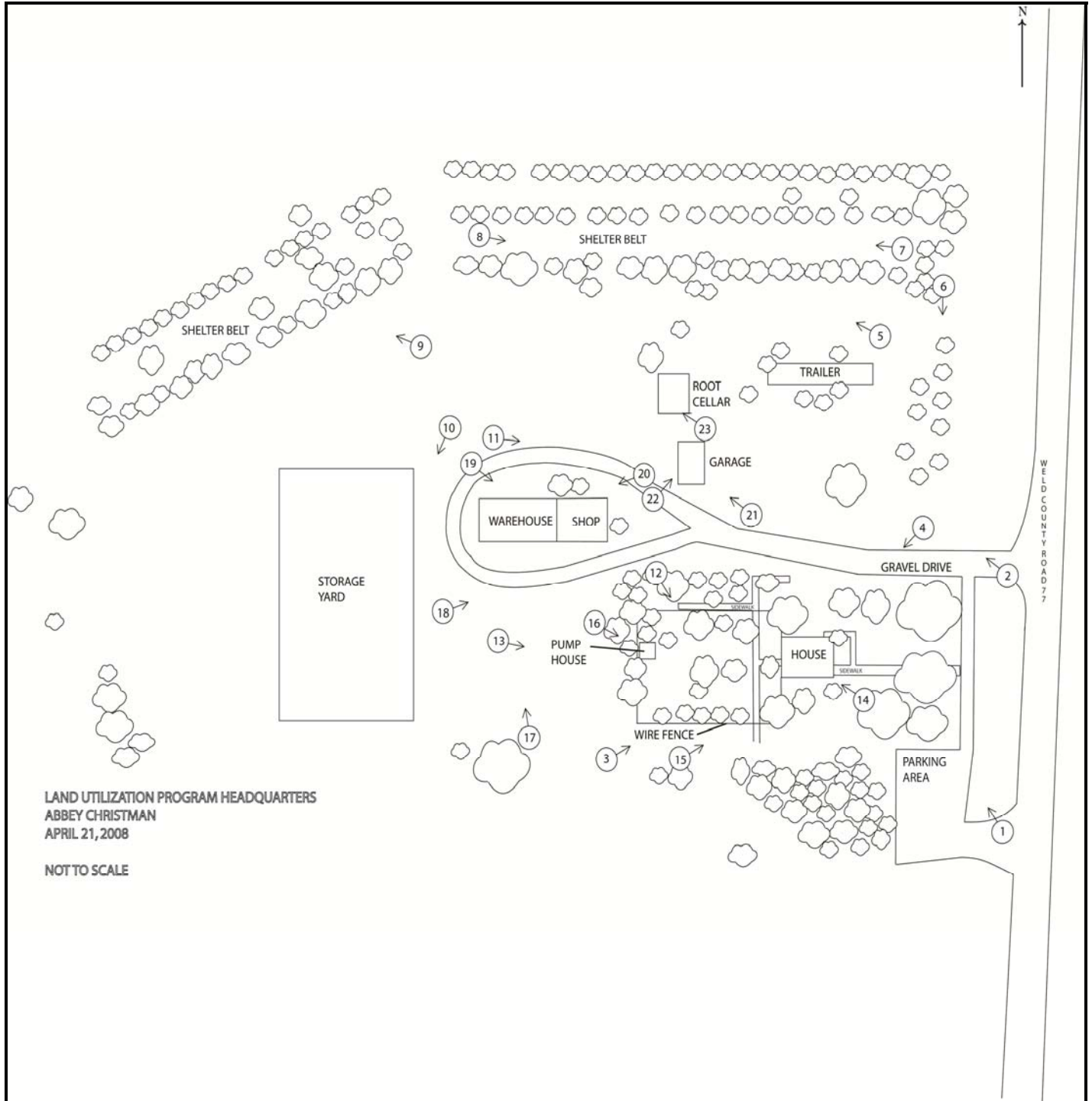


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LAND UTILIZATION PROGRAM HEADQUARTERS
ABBEY CHRISTMAN
APRIL 21, 2008

NOT TO SCALE

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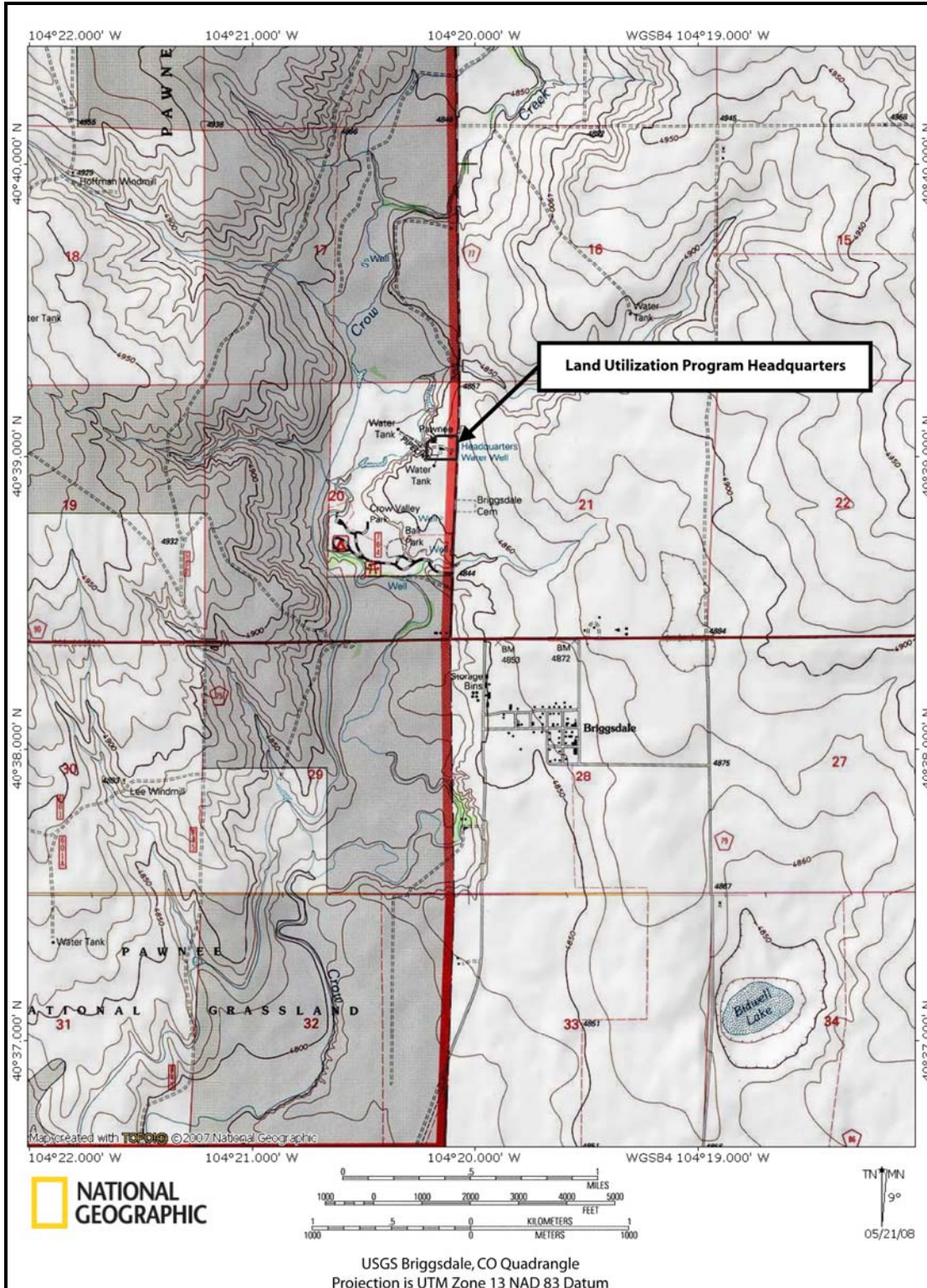
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USGS TOPOGRAPHIC MAP
Briggsdale Quadrangle, Colorado
7.5 Minute Series

UTM: Zone 13 / 556205mE / 4499 951mN (NAD 27)
PLSS: 6thPM, T8N, R62W, Sec. 20, S SE NE NE and N NE SE NE
Elevation: 4855 feet



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PHOTOGRAPH LOG

The following information pertains to photograph numbers 1-25:

Name of Property: Land Utilization Program Headquarters
Location: Briggsdale vicinity, Weld County
Photographer: Abigail Christman
Date of Photographs: April 21, 2008 with the exception of photographs 1, 2, 14, 16, 17, and 23 taken on November 7, 2007

Digital tif files on CD submitted to National Register, Washington, D.C.

<u>Photo No.</u>	<u>Photographic Information</u>
------------------	---------------------------------

- | | |
|----|---|
| 1 | Briggsdale Work Center, with house on the left. Facing northwest. |
| 2 | Entrance of Briggsdale Work Center, with shop, garage, cellar, and trailer visible left to right. Facing northwest. |
| 3 | Windbreak around house. Facing northeast. |
| 4 | Windbreak around house. Facing southwest. |
| 5 | Shelterbelt. Facing northwest. |
| 6 | Windbreak along eastern edge of site. Facing south. |
| 7 | Interior of shelterbelt. Facing west. |
| 8 | Interior of shelterbelt. Facing east/southeast. |
| 9 | Diagonal shelterbelt. Facing northwest. |
| 10 | Storage yard. Facing southwest. |
| 11 | Cellar, garage, and shop/warehouse. Facing east. |
| 12 | Windbreak around house. Facing southeast. |
| 13 | Rear of house with shop/warehouse on left. Facing east. |
| 14 | House. Facing northwest. |
| 15 | House. Facing northeast. |
| 16 | House and pumphouse. Facing southeast. |
| 17 | Shop/warehouse. Facing north. |
| 18 | Shop/warehouse. Facing northeast. |
| 19 | Shop/warehouse. Facing southeast. |
| 20 | Shop/warehouse. Facing southwest. |
| 21 | Garage and cellar. Facing northwest. |
| 22 | Garage. Facing northeast. |
| 23 | Cellar. Facing northwest. |
| 24 | Interior of house, showing living room. Facing southeast. |
| 25 | Interior of shop. Facing south. |

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PHOTOGRAPH LOG- HISTORIC

All of the following are from Forest Service files. Photos 1-5 from Exhibit VI-Photo Album of the Final Plan for the Weld County Land Readjustment Project.

Photo No. Photographic Information

- 1 Land covered with cactus due to overgrazing.
- 2 Badly blown soil.
- 3 Top soil blown into road.
- 4 Abandoned farm.
- 5 Abandoned farm.
- 6 Headquarters office c. 1936.
- 7 Meeting at the headquarters c. 1936.
- 8 Headquarters complex showing the house/office, granary, and shop/barn, c.1937-1938.
- 9 View of the complex showing growth of the trees and shrubs c. 1940.
- 10 View of the complex showing growth of the trees and shrubs c. 1940.

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HISTORIC PHOTOGRAPHS



H1. "The extreme density of cactus is the result of over-grazing."



H2. "Top soil badly blown from cultivated land. . . . The continued cultivation of such tracts will eventually result in all top soil being blown away."

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H3. "Top soil blown from cultivated land into roads.
Many roads have been closed to travel
on account of this condition."



H4. "In many cases residents were compelled
to move on account of severe dust storms."

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H5. "Abandoned house appraised at \$60.00. Farming operations on small tracts has proven unprofitable."



H6. Headquarters office, c. 1936.

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H7. Meeting at the headquarters c. 1936.



H8. Slightly later (c.1937-1938) photo of the headquarters showing the house/office, granary, and shop/barn. The house has been painted white. The plantings are very young.

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H9. View of the complex (c. 1940) showing growth of the trees and shrubs.



H10. View of the complex (c. 1940) showing growth of trees and shrubs.