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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

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This form is used for documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (National Register Bulletin 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

__X__ New Submission _____ Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Historic Ranching Resources of South Park, Colorado

B. Associated Historic Contexts

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

I. The History of Ranching in South Park, Colorado, 1859-1950

C. Form Prepared by

name/title R. Laurie Simmons and Thomas H. Simmons, historians
organization Front Range Research Associates, Inc. date Aug. 27, 1999
street & number 3635 W. 46th Ave. telephone (303) 477-7597
city or town Denver state Colorado zip code 80211

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archaeology and Historic Preservation. (See continuation sheet for additional comments [ ].)

Georgianna Contiguglia, State Historic Preservation Officer — 12/10/99
Signature and title of certifying official — Date
State Historic Preservation Office, Colorado Historical Society
State or Federal agency and bureau

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Beth Boland — 1/28/00
Signature of the Keeper — Date of Action

Historic Ranching Resources of South Park, Colorado

Associated Historic Contexts:

The History of Ranching in South Park, Colorado, 1859-1950

Table of Contents for Written Narrative

Provide the following information on continuation sheets. Cite the letter and the title before each section of the narrative. Assign page numbers according to the instructions for continuation sheet in *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (National Register Bulletin 16B). Fill in page numbers for each section in the space below.

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Primary location of additional data:

[X] State Historic Preservation Office
[ ] Other State Agency
[ ] Federal Agency
[ ] Local Government
[ ] University
[ ] Other

Name of repository:

_____

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 average 120 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

E. STATEMENT OF HISTORIC CONTEXTS

The History of Ranching in South Park, Colorado, 1859-1950

South Park, a broad, level mountain valley in Park County, Colorado, varies in elevation from 8,500 feet to 10,000 feet. South Park's altitude and climate, with its short growing season, late springs, cold summer nights, and early autumns, prevented the development of extensive farming. However, the abundant native hay and grasses appeared to early visitors to be ideal for livestock raising. Traveling through the Park in 1842, Rufus B. Sage noted the large herds of game which thrived in the Park and opined that "it is undoubtedly well adapted to stockraising, and were it not for unseasonable frosts, might be turned to good account for agricultural purposes." The Ute Indians utilized South Park as a summer pasture, hunted there in the summer and fall, and treasured its plentiful game and nutritious grasses. Other tribes also coveted the abundance of the Park, but the Utes managed to control the area until 1881, when they were relegated to reservations.[1]

Pioneer Development of Ranching in South Park, 1859-1869

A few cattle had occupied the plains since the Spanish had entered southeastern Colorado. European-Americans brought cattle into the area of Bent's Old Fort as early as the 1830s, and livestock were also raised at Fort Lupton in Weld County. The discovery of gold resulted in the demand for beef in the mining camps, which made large-scale cattle raising a profitable enterprise. Prospectors who used oxen to transport supplies and equipment noted that the exhausted animals revived when turned onto the plains and allowed to consume native grasses. In 1858 Colonel John D. Henderson let his oxen forage on the prairie northeast of Denver. The following spring, Henderson found his cattle along Bijou Creek (east of Denver), healthy and well-fed. A.J. Williams made a similar discovery about the fattening properties of Colorado grass after arriving at Auraria in 1858. In South Park, Samuel Hartsel learned that tired animals regained their health when turned out to graze on native grasses.

The earliest ranchers claimed locations with excellent sources of water, natural hay meadows, and the potential to acquire immense grazing lands. During the early days of the beef industry in Colorado, range land was free, and ranchers' expenses were limited to hiring men to herd the animals and occasionally providing hay for winter food. Whoever was willing to take the risk of conducting business in an isolated area could acquire large tracts of land and start a cattle operation. Early cattlemen acquired enormous expanses of land by

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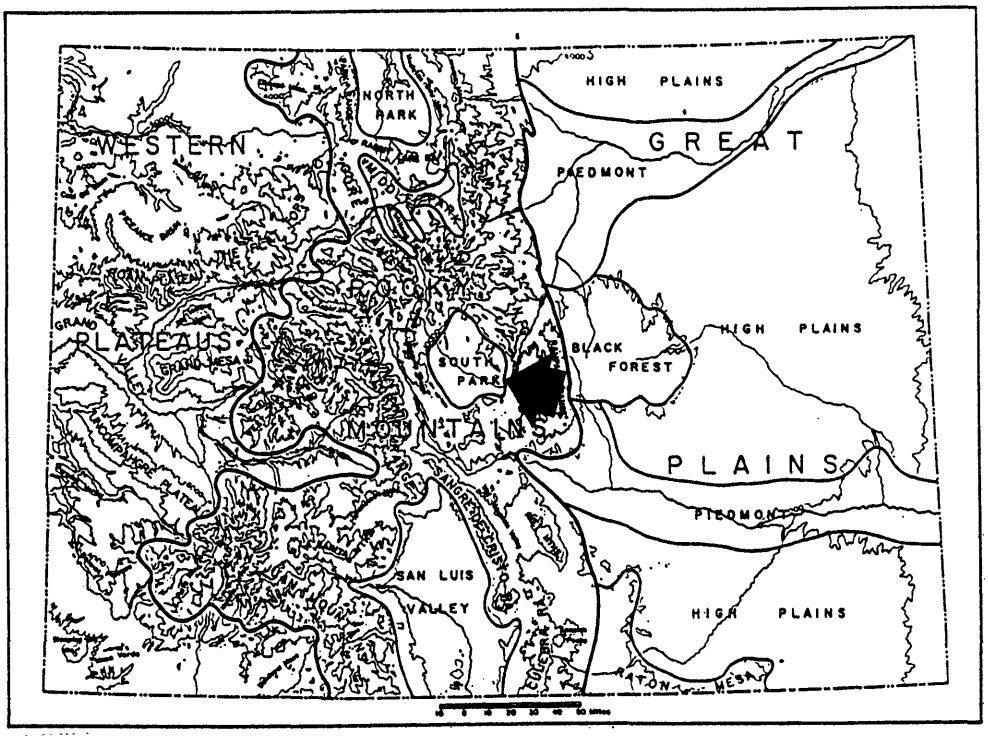
[1]Rufus B. Sage, **Rufus B. Sage: His Letters and Papers, 1836-1847** (Glendale, Ca.: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1956), 189.

controlling acreage along sources of water. The principle of "first in time, first in right" applied to the range as well as to irrigation. If land was already taken, a cattleman moved on until he found uncontested acreage of his own. Thus, a man's range was defined in relation to that of his neighbor.[2]



South Park (arrow) is located near the center of Colorado. SOURCE: Noel, Mahoney, and Stevens, Historical Atlas of Colorado.

Denver newspapers began advertising the availability of fresh beef during the summer of 1859. Booming mining camps created large markets for meat, and the first ranchers discerned that fortunes could be made supplying food for the goldseekers. By the early 1860s, several cattlemen had established operations along the South Platte River. By 1867, there were an estimated 147,000 cattle in Colorado. Enough cattlemen were in the state to unite over mutual concerns of the industry. On 30 November 1867, the Colorado Stockgrowers' Association was organized in Denver. The constitution and by-laws of the

[2]John Lipsey, "The Bayou Salade: South Park," **The Westerners Brand Book, 1947** (Denver: The Westerners Denver Posse, 1949), 119; **Pueblo Star Journal**, 24 July 1966; Carl Abbott, Stephen J. Leonard, and David McComb, **Colorado: A History of the Centennial State**, Rev. ed. (Boulder, Colo.: Colorado Associated University Press, 1982), 166; Richard Goff and Robert McCaffree, **Century in the Saddle** (Denver: Colorado Cattlemen's Centennial Commission, 1967), 143-144; Ubbelohde, Benson, and Smith, 171.

association were prepared under the direction of Dr. John Parsons, who had established a mint during the early days at Tarryall in Park County, and later owned a ranch near Denver. In January 1868, the Stockgrowers hired detectives to curtail rustling and protect the brands of members throughout the state.[3]

The Civil War delayed the growth of the cattle industry in Colorado. Most meat produced during the conflict supplied local demand. However, disruptions caused by the war prevented cattle from being shipped to the East from Texas, and some large herds were driven into South Park for sale. These herds came up the Pecos River into New Mexico, into Colorado, over Poncha Pass to Salida, and over Trout Creek Pass into South Park. In 1866, when Brig. Gen. James Rusling traveled through South Park, he noted that "ranches and settlements were more numerous, and the spirit of enterprise was everywhere observable. . . the ranches thickened up all the way to Fairplay . . . ."[4]

In 1868, the **Rocky Mountain News** reported that the "vast agricultural wealth of . . . [South Park] is attracting the attention of our farmers and stock raisers. . . ." Among the best known of the early South Park ranchers were Samuel Hartsel, Joseph Rogers, Louis Guiraud, George Dudley, George Green, A.S. Turner, and L.W. Robbins. The ranchers diverted water from local streams to irrigate grasslands and harvested hay by cutting, curing, and stacking or hauling wagonloads to supply camps such as Fairplay. As roads in the area improved, hay was transported over Weston Pass into Leadville, bringing profits as large as $100 per ton.[5]

Following the Civil War, Colorado's population grew and beef once again was in great demand. As the profitability of raising cattle was proven, cattle ranching operations were established throughout the plains. In 1868, the cattle market at Abilene was crowded with buyers, including several Colorado ranchers wanting to stock up their pastures. The first trainload of cattle to be shipped east from Colorado was loaded at Kit Carson in 1869. When the first railroads were completed to Denver in 1870, cattle production became more profitable as shipping points to eastern markets were established.[6]

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[3]Maurice W. Frink; W. Turrentine Jackson; Agnes Wright Spring, **When Grass Was King: Contributions to the Western Range Cattle Industry** (Boulder, Colo.: University of Colorado Press, 1956), 33 and 345-347; Goff and McCaffree, 25 and 27; George G. Everett, **Cattle Cavalcade in Central Colorado** (Denver: Golden Bell Press, 1966), 310-311; Ora B. Peake, **The Range Cattle Industry** (Glendale, Ca.: The Arthur H. Clark Co., 1937), 16.

[4]Alvin T. Steinel, **History of Agriculture in Colorado** (Fort Collins, Colo.: State Agricultural College, 1926.), 112; **Denver Post**, 4 May 1930, 6; and Lipsey, 116.

[5]**Rocky Mountain News**, 31 December 1868, 1; and **Pueblo Star Journal**, 24 July 1966.

[6]Walter Prescott Webb, **The Great Plains** (Lincoln, Neb.: University of Nebraska Press, 1981), 334-334; Frink, Jackson, and Spring, 39 and 119; Edward Everett Dale, **The Range Cattle Industry on the Great Plains from 1865 to 1925** (Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press, 1930, new ed., 1960), 41; Ubbelohde, Benson, and Smith, 172; **Denver Post**, 4 May 1930; and Steinel, 118.

By the late 1860s, the agricultural potential of Colorado was being extensively promoted. In 1867, Territorial Governor John Evans stated that

> the whole of the plains and the parks in the mountains of Colorado are the finest of pastoral lands. Stock fattens and thrives on them the year round, large herds and flocks being kept there in the finest possible condition. In some parts, it is true, the snow covers the ground for a part of the winter, but in other places cattle and sheep are wintered without feeding with entire success. The celebrated parks, North, Middle, South, and San Luis, are the agricultural valleys for grass and small grains.[7]

By 1869, it was generally recognized that most types of farming would not be successful in South Park. However, the nutritious native grasses were touted as excellent for raising beef cattle and sheep. In addition, a few crops, such as wheat, oats, and barley, were suggested as being potentially suited to the growing season. Dairy cattle were also described as thriving on the local grasses and benefitting from the cool air and pure water.[8]

The Big Build-up in Colorado Ranching, 1870-1879

The 1870s were the heyday of the open range and cattle trails in Colorado, and the growth of the industry resulted in huge successes for individual cattlemen. In 1870, the Kansas Pacific Railroad arrived in Denver, which began to develop into the "cross-roads of the western range cattle industry." Four carloads of cattle were sent east from Denver in 1872. By 1877, the capital city was the principal shipping point for the Colorado livestock industry, which began to expand at a dramatic rate. The growth of the business is reflected in the increase in the number of cattle in the state: from 291,000 in 1870 to 809,000 in 1880. By the 1870s, several cattlemen had established enormous holdings in Colorado, with ranch headquarters located throughout the eastern plains and in the mountain parks. These "cattle kings" were an important component of the early days of the open range industry, principally from 1870-1880.[9]

Richard Goff and Robert McCaffree described the lives of the early day individual cattlemen:

> They had gone into a frontier that was only wilderness, they had located a ranch, built their headquarters and working corrals, bought a few foundation cattle and slowly built up their herds.

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[7]**Rocky Mountain News**, 28 March 1867.

[8]**Rocky Mountain News**, 9 August 1869.

[9]Benjamin F. Davis, "Livestock in Colorado," in **Encyclopedia of Colorado**, 48; Goff and McCaffree, 48, 53, and 72.

> Hardship, high risk, and often great personal danger had been their lot. Indians, severe storms, drought and cattle thieves had made the fight a long and sometimes bloody one. But, it was the story of their success that caught the imagination and admiration of the world.[10]

Among the most successful cattle barons in the state were John W. Iliff, John Hittson, Finis P. Ernest, J.L. Brush, John W. Prowers, and Hiram S. Holly. John Wesley Iliff was the greatest cattle operator in Colorado, owning thousands of acres of range land and controlling an area stretching from Greeley to Julesburg by 1878. Another dominant figure in Colorado's cattle industry during this period was John Wesley Prowers, who started his career as a freighter for the Bents and by 1881 controlled 400,000 acres. James C. Jones acquired control of enough land to graze fifteen thousand head of cattle in the Arkansas Valley in 1879. In South Park, Samuel Hartsel was one of the largest landholders and most successful cattle ranchers.[11]

By the 1870s, cattlemen realized that success in the open range industry required cooperation among its participants. By forming organizations which established procedures for identifying cattle, dealing with rustlers, and insuring the health of herds, the stockraisers laid the foundation for future growth. The first county-wide cattlemen's association was founded by the Bent County stockmen in 1870. In January 1872, the Colorado Cattlemen's Association was established with John G. Lilley as president. The association published brand books, offered rewards for capture of cattle thieves, employed legal advisors, provided health and brand inspectors at shipping sites, publicized the industry, and lobbied for favorable legislation. The territorial legislature cooperated with the cattlemen in establishing a legal framework for the industry. In 1872, the lawmakers provided for the countywide registration of brands. In 1879, a state inspection service was established to control losses from rustling and strays. After 1879, the state was divided into roundup districts with commissioners. In 1885, Colorado created a veterinary board to enforce quarantines against sick cattle and required statewide brand registration.[12]

An 1870 publication reported six thousand head of cattle and seven hundred horses being raised in the vicinity of Fairplay. The promise of South Park is reflected in the fact that Nathaniel Meeker planned to locate his Union Colony there, but was encouraged by William N. Byers to select Weld County instead. Park County's agricultural potential was widely discussed during the early 1870s. In 1871, the **Daily Central City Register** optimistically reported that South Park residents had "excellent crops growing on the frequent ranches

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[10]Goff and McCaffree, 79-80.
[11]Goff and McCaffree, 79; and Ubbelohde, Benson, and Smith, 175.
[12]Everett, **Cattle Cavalcade**, 311; and Abbott, Leonard, and McComb, 167.

[which] bear witness to the quality of the soil, and are sufficient proof that grain and vegetables can be raised in abundance from Denver to South Park." In 1872, the area was described as ". . . a vast meadow which supports thousands of cattle." Tourist Isabella Bird wrote that South Park in 1873 was "a rolling prairie seventy-five miles long and over 10,000-feet-high, treeless, bounded by mountains, and so rich in sun-cured hay that one might fancy that all the herds of Colorado could find pasture there."[13]

Throughout the 1870s, South Park received much attention as an area of agricultural opportunity. Although glowing descriptions of the Park's possibilities were printed, some cautionary information was also provided. As early as 1872, the **Rocky Mountain News** reported difficulties arising from raising livestock during severe winters in South Park. In February of that year, Samuel Hartsel presented an account of the state of ranching, relating that local cattle were generally in good condition when they could get to feed. Texas cattle driven to winter in the Park were bothered by the severe cold and looked bad. One herd at Hamilton had been caught in a severe winter storm, and about half of the animals had died. Hartsel reported that he had five hundred high grade American cattle, all in good condition.[14]

A newspaper correspondent accompanying the Hayden expedition in 1875 reported that, although to his eye the Park was rather barren, a local rancher told him that some of the finest beef cattle in the country were being raised there. The rancher noted that in the summer cattle found plenty of food, but in winter feeding might be more difficult. Despite the severe winters, the correspondent reported that there was "quite a race among settlers for land there" and that, except for a small portion, all of the land in the Park had been taken up.[15]

The **Rocky Mountain News** stated that, until 1876, very little land was fenced in Park County. Before that time, the cattlemen controlled vast acreages of open range. The building of the Denver, South Park and Pacific Railroad through the Park in 1879 was to impact the open range cattle industry in a number of important ways. As railroad crews began to work their way through Park County, the demand for dairy products dramatically increased the number of dairy herds. In addition, the large volume of freighting to the silver camp of Leadville resulted in the fencing of ranches to offer pasturage to freight teams and to protect them from other cattle. Stockraisers began to concentrate on providing dairy products to meet the demand of the railroad crews and mining camps, and a market also

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[13]Lipsey, 121; Jerome C. Smiley, **History of Denver** (Denver: Old Americana Publishing Co., 1978), 456; **Daily Central City Register**, 20 August 1871; Isabella L. Bird, **A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains** (Norman, Ok.: University of Oklahoma Press, 1960), 171.

[14]**Rocky Mountain News**, 24 February 1872, 1.

[15]**Rocky Mountain News**, 8 July 1875.

grew for veal calves and old cows unsuitable for shipping East. The Park also became more accessible to homesteaders who could transport their supplies by railroad. These trends resulted in the first appreciable construction of fences in South Park.[16]

Growth of the Big Cattle Companies, the Big Die-up, and Expansion of the Sheep Industry, 1880-1889

Open range cattle raising, as practiced by cattle barons such as Iliff and Hartsel, and characterized by great round-ups and cattle drives, existed for a relatively short period in Colorado. The glamour generated by the individual cattle kings attracted outside investors and others yearning to be a part of the flourishing industry. Corporations were created to operate large-scale cattle businesses in the 1880s, and many of the self-made cowmen sold their operations to the new companies. Although cattle prices had declined in the late 1870s, by the early 1880s conditions on the range were good and feed was plentiful. In addition, silver mining camps such as Leadville were fueling the state's prosperity and creating new markets for meat. By the 1880s, cattle ranching on the plains had evolved from a frontier operation into a major industry.[17]

In 1879, 134 ranches had been counted in the Park. At the same time, the total number of cattle grazing in South Park was estimated at 19,815 head worth $297,235. In 1880, the **Fairplay Flume** reported that the interests of ranching and mining were so intimately combined in Park County that it was difficult to distinguish the proportion of the population committed to each, although an estimate of two-thirds devoted to mining was offered. In the same year, the **Rocky Mountain News** noted that "in the neighborhood of Hamilton are extensive hay ranches, and the mountains are covered with an abundant supply of choice grasses."[18]

During the 1880s, 226 cattle companies were founded in Colorado, and the state witnessed the largest cattle boom in its history. English and Scottish investors were among the most prolific in forming cattle investment companies and buying ranchlands. The business was boosted by promoters such as Baron Walter von Richthofen of Denver, who wrote books about the ease of acquiring fortunes in cattle ranching in the West. Richthofen, who apparently never owned a ranch, assured his readers that "there is not the slightest element of uncertainty in cattleraising." The "mania" for cattle production extended from Montana to New Mexico. "Old time cowmen" stated that the most cattle ever seen in South Park

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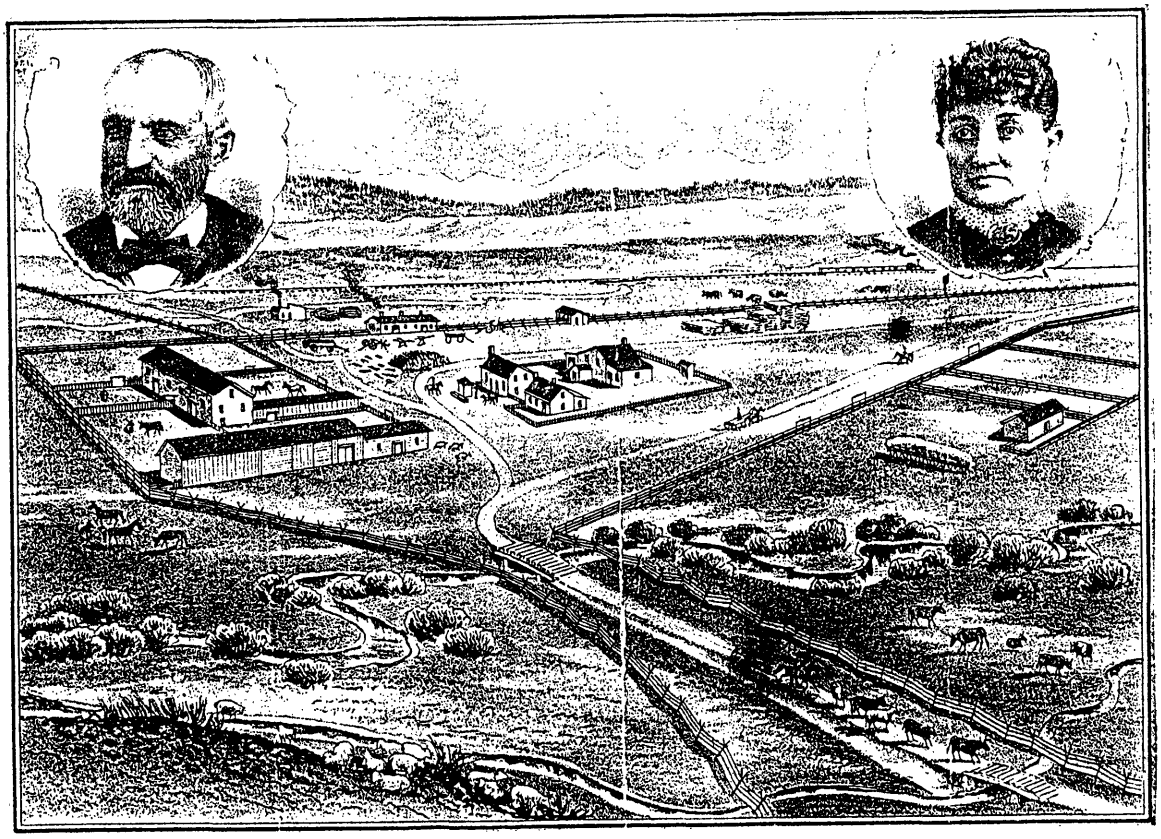
[16]**Rocky Mountain News**, 21 February 1880, 5.

[17]Goff and McCaffree, 80-81.

[18]**Fairplay Flume** report in the **Rocky Mountain News**, 18 July 1880; **Rocky Mountain News**, 30 January 1880 and 1 January 1882, 12.

were there during the 1880s.[19]



Samuel Hartsel amassed huge land holdings for his cattle operations in South Park. This circa 1906 line drawing shows Hartsel and his wife with a view of his ranch headquarters three miles east of Hartsel (view southwest). SOURCE: Colorado Historical Society, Denver, Colorado.

Money from Eastern, British, and European investors poured into the state during the decade. The largest of the foreign-owned cow corporations which operated in Colorado was the Prairie Cattle Company, organized in 1881 with investors in Edinburgh and London. The company had almost sixty thousand head of cattle on its two million acres of range in Colorado. The outfit acquired the holdings of James Jones and other large operators, thereby gaining control of a tract of land fifty miles wide from the Arkansas River to the state's southern boundary. In 1881, the Prairie Cattle Company reported a 26 percent profit.[20]

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[19]Goff and McCaffree, 107; Dale, 76 and 82; Webb, 235; Walter Baron Von Richthofen, **Cattle-Raising on the Plains of North America** (D. Appleton and Co., 1885; reprint Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press, 1964); Everett and Hutchinson, 199.

[20]Abbott, Leonard, and McComb, 168; Ubbelohde, Benson, and Smith, 176; Goff and McCaffree, 109.

A rather severe winter in 1880 was followed by mild winters in 1881-1882 and 1882-1883, which produced fine herds bringing excellent prices. The price of cattle began to rise after 1880 and, by 1882, reached its highest level up to that time. As a result, cattlemen realized profits as high as 300 percent on stock they had purchased three years earlier. Money from the East and from Britain continued to flow into Colorado, and the cattle industry continued to be touted as an excellent investment. In January 1882, the **Rocky Mountain News** reported on agricultural conditions around the state, and noted that Park County was "a magnificent agricultural region, a large portion of its territory lying in the beautiful South Park, one of the richest of the grazing and farming sections."[21]

In 1884, the same newspaper reported that

> the agricultural domain of Park county is chiefly in that most beautiful high valley known as South Park. . . . The chief product of this region is hay, the quality of which is unsurpassed by any known, if indeed, it is not superior to any other. It is the native grass of the country, which runs to a bright green color. Horses and cattle will trample over the best timothy and clover to get this native hay of the parks. Rye, barley, oats and other cereals grow here to the greatest perfection. The pasturage of South Park is very superior, keeping stock of all kinds, the year round, in good condition without other food. Some of the most successful cattle raisers in Colorado hold their herds in this park.[22]

Many of the cattlemen who profited greatly during the early 1880s contributed to the development of the state by investing in other businesses, financing major improvements in local communities, and supporting the cultural life of Colorado. Some successful cattlemen erected substantial commercial buildings in Denver which helped it win its place as the leading business and financial center of the Rocky Mountain region. Samuel Hartsel utilized a portion of the profits resulting from his cattle operations to establish a hotel and hot springs resort at Hartsel. Adolph Guiraud, also of South Park, invested money obtained from hayraising to open a meat market in Denver and a grocery store at Fairplay.

By the 1880s, the climate of South Park was generally judged to be inhospitable to the raising of most fruits, vegetables, and grains. In February 1880, the **Rocky Mountain News** reported that in Park County

> The only agricultural points are on the north fork of the South Platte at Deer

[21]**Rocky Mountain News**, 1 January 1882, 12 and 30 July 1882.
[22]**Rocky Mountain News**, 1 January 1884.

Valley, Bailey's and Slaght's, at the junction of the Tarryall with the south fork of the South Platte, and for a short distance up the former stream at Buffalo Springs and the head of Currant creek.[23]

Small gardens were tended in other locations, but at the risk of early frosts. Many farms and ranches grew potatoes for home consumption. On the mountain slopes a rich supply of grasses grew for grazing, and in the valleys numerous waterways produced natural meadows. Irrigation was said to result in excellent hay, with returns as high as three tons per acre. Cattle raising was recommended as "still more profitable," with the mining camps furnishing a reliable market. Many operations combined both hay and cattle production.

Like their counterparts in other parts of the state, cattlemen in Park County joined together in associations to further their industry. In April 1884, a meeting of the Park County Stock Growers' Association was announced at Kester. "Everyone interested in stock matters in that section" was expected to attend.[24]

In 1887, the Colorado Midland Railway built tracks across the southern portion of South Park and established stations at Howbert, Spinney, and Hartsel. The Midland became known as the "stockman's railroad" because it shipped large volumes of livestock from South Park along its system. Hartsel was the most important livestock shipping point for the Midland in South Park, and the railroad facilities there included large stock pens.

Many of the outside investors in the western cattle industry during the 1880s were ignorant of the complexities of the business. Huge herds placed on the range without supplemental food resulted in overgrazing. Inferior quality cattle were raised routinely. Large sums of money were borrowed at high interest rates. It was generally assumed that cattle could survive the winter without any extra feed or shelter, but severe winters proved the assumption wrong. During 1885-1887, a series of dry summers and harsh winters resulted in terrible losses. So many cattle perished that the period was thereafter referred to as "the big die-up."[25]

Adding to the cattlemen's worries were diminishing cattle prices, the spread of infectious diseases, and the expansion of settlement into rangelands. Declines in cattle prices during the late 1880s reduced the value of herds by approximately 40 percent. During this time, many outside investors abandoned the business. Cattlemen who had attempted to control the range saw their fences on public lands torn down by homesteaders, who often

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[23]**Rocky Mountain News**, 21 February 1880, 5. Slaght's ranch was for many years a stage station.
[24]**Rocky Mountain News**, 12 April 1884, 5.
[25]Dale, 90.

surrounded their own claims by fences to keep cattle from tromping crops. In this manner the open range was steadily whittled away.[26]

Rancher Harry Epperson recalled that in the early days

> . . . a person could fence as much government land as he cared to, provided he didn't enclose it. Most cow outfits were located near a mountain. They would have someone take up an eighty acre pre-emption claim on which to locate their house and corrals, then they would run a fence, made of poles, around three sides of the large tract of land. The mountain enclosed the other side. . . .[27]

Following the severe winter of 1886-1887, several large cattle companies went out of business, and many out-of-work cowboys became homesteaders. It was reported that blizzard after blizzard swept through South Park and that Samuel Hartsel lost thousands of head of cattle in the snow. The following spring, Hartsel found cattle carcasses bearing his brand as far as 150 miles away. The severe winters of the late 1880s forced Hartsel to fence his holdings of bottom land and irrigate his hay meadows. Hartsel began to put out thousands of tons of winter forage for feeding. However, many smaller ranchers could not recover from the losses they sustained. By 1888, cattle were considered "poor property" in Colorado. Most of the European-financed operations ceased at this point.[28]

The reduction of beef herds provided an excellent opportunity for the expansion of sheep. Sheep had been raised by early settlers on Mexican land grants in southern Colorado before the gold rush. Both wool and mutton found markets in the early mining camps. In 1869, Merino sheep were introduced to Colorado and sheep breeding improved. Soon thereafter, sheep were introduced to South Park. During the 1870s, it was estimated that the number of sheep in Colorado had increased from approximately twenty thousand to over two million. In the early years, sheep were driven to grazing areas in the same manner as cattle. In 1879, approximately two thousand head of sheep were estimated to reside in Park County.

The following year, the **Rocky Mountain News** stated that there were a few bands of sheep in Park County which were bringing good profits due to demands in the mining camps. The sheep were turned out to range in the mountains during the summer and kept on ranches during the winter. The arrival of sheep led to some conflicts with cattlemen, who believed that the animals cropped the grass too closely and that cattle would not drink where sheep

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[26]Ubbelohde, Benson, and Smith, 178.

[27]Epperson, 56.

[28]Abbott, Leonard, and McComb, 168; Frink, Jackson, and Spring, 93-96, 101, 105; **Colorado Springs Gazette and Telegraph**, 7 April 1929; and Dale, 94.

had been. Many cattlegrowers were committed to keeping their ranges free of sheep. The sheep industry was also hard hit by the Panic of 1893, when prices dropped 40 to 60 percent.[29]

Severe weather returned during the winters of 1892 and 1893. In 1893, a nationwide economic depression sent cattle prices downward, and the next year prices reached their lowest point during the nineteenth century. By the end of the century, prices improved and ranching activity increased, but the industry never resumed the level of production or profit of the previous decade. One effort to improve the lot of ranchers was the formation of the National Stock Growers' Association in Denver in 1898. Colorado cattlemen were leaders in the movement to form a national organization.[30]

The cattlemen who remained in South Park after the big die-up adjusted their stockraising methods, concentrating on the production of high quality animals. Successful ranchers erected fences; insured adequate water supplies through construction of ditches, wells, and windmills; and controlled breeding. Cattle, although still the primary focus of many ranches, were raised in herds much smaller than those in the days of the large foreign corporations and early cattle barons, but were of good, blooded stock. Sheep gained increased acceptance on the prairie. In addition to range use by cattlemen, homesteaders also grazed their animals on the public lands. Traditional roundups were further limited by the establishment of Forest Reserves, beginning in 1892.

Ranchers still faced uncertainty and the whims of nature. In November 1898, a prairie fire between Como and Jefferson reportedly destroyed one thousand acres of pasture and two thousand tons of hay. The winter of 1898 was so harsh that Fairplay was snowbound for forty-eight days, and teams were forced to haul mail and food on sleds from as far away as Bailey. The Denver, South Park and Pacific was required to purchase a new rotary snowplow after one was damaged "working through a cut into which a herd of cattle had drifted to protect themselves from the cold and had frozen to death beneath about fifteen feet of snow. The big rotary went right through the cut, throwing refrigerated beef steaks all over the adjacent mountainside."[31] More progressive members of the cattle industry routinely began providing winter feed after 1898.

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[29]Frink, Jackson, and Spring, 105; Ubbelohde, Benson, and Smith, 179; **Rocky Mountain News**, 21 February 1880, 5; Steinel, 148-149.

[30]Goff and McCaffree, 131; Dale, 101; and Davis, 51.

[31]Abbott, Leonard, and McComb, 168; Webb, 396-397; **Denver Times**, 1 November 1898, 2; **Pueblo Chieftain**, 9 May 1965; Everett and Hutchinson, 199 and 202; and Poor, 312.

South Park Ranching in the Twentieth Century, 1900-1950

By the early twentieth century, cattlemen had developed new techniques to meet the challenges of the variable climate and changing markets. The focus of cattle raising had shifted from the range to the ranch. Irrigation systems were expanded to produce increased feed necessary for winter months. The breakup of the large operators allowed some smaller local ranchers to establish successful enterprises by erecting winter shelters, putting up winter feed, and generally taking better care of their cattle. Cattlemen increasingly had to buy or lease fenced pastures for cattle as the open range continued to shrink. Feeding, as opposed to grazing, was advanced by the improvement of cattle breeds. The popularity of Shorthorns dwindled and Herefords began to dominate the plains.[32]

The early 1900s saw favorable conditions for stock production. Those who had survived declines during the late nineteenth century were in a good position to prosper when the economic outlook improved. Cattleman James T. Witcher noted that in 1902 the open range still extended from Canon City to Fairplay, and some herds as large as one to five thousand head were grazing in the Park. He judged, however, that the days of large herds totalling five to ten thousand cattle were gone forever.[33]

In 1905, the Park County Cattle Growers' Association was formed, including men such as J.E. Harrington, Jr., and Samuel Hartsel. Another local organization for ranchers was the Park County Wool Growers' Association, headquartered in Hartsel. In 1906, the first Western Stock Show (later the National Western Stock Show) was held in Denver. In November of that year, the **Fairplay Flume** reported that "hay shipping has been very good the past two weeks. The price received here is fourteen dollars a ton." During the same month, cattle owners were conducting a roundup, with six riders searching the range. The weather took a toll on stockraising the following year, when a severe winter was followed by a dry summer. These conditions, compounded by a nationwide economic slump, resulted in distress for the cattle industry. George Everett marked 1907 as the beginning of the end for one of the large operators in South Park, the Boston Land & Cattle Company.[34]

In 1908, pioneer rancher Samuel Hartsel sold his land and cattle to the South Park Land and Livestock Company which had been organized by Cripple Creek banker J.D. Husted. Husted also established the White Bear Cattle Company at Meeker and several other cattle firms.

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[32]Frink, Jackson, and Spring, 57 and 109; Goff and McCaffree, 138; the **Denver Times**, 11 September 1902, 4.

[33]James T. Witcher, "The Cattle Business in Park County During My Lifetime," in Everett, **Cattle Cavalcade**, 343.

[34]Peake, 313 and 318; Davis, 52; **Fairplay Flume**, 16 November 1906; **Fairplay Flume**, 9 November 1906; and Everett, **Cattle Cavalcade**, 329-330.

The company's operations reflected changes in ranching in Colorado. It ran about 12,000 head of livestock, including 1,200 cattle, 200 horses, and 10,000 sheep. Hartsel sold his hot springs resort and the townsite of Hartsel to the Hartsel Hot Springs Development Company.[35]

The Colorado Stockgrowers' Association joined a national campaign to fight the growing power of the five major packing companies which dominated the meat market during the early twentieth century. These packers, including Armour, Swift, Cudahy, Wilson, and Morris, were popularly known as "the Beef Trust." Swift and Company established itself in Hartsel, where it erected a mercantile and acquired the Hartsel Ranch. In 1918, the Federal Trade Commission stated that "the producer of livestock is at the mercy of the five companies because they control the market places, storage facilities, and to some extent the rolling stock which transports their products." The Packers and Stockyards Act of 1921 granted the Department of Agriculture powers of supervision over the meat packing industry.[36]

On 2 December 1913, about two-and-a-half feet of snow fell in South Park one of the worst storms of the twentieth century. Cattlemen gathered their cattle as best they could and provided feed if they could acquire it. Feed at the time was expensive and scarce; some cattlemen were forced out of business.[37]

During the early twentieth century, South Park still had substantial unfenced land, and cattle were allowed to drift with the season, moving to the high country in the summer and traveling to the bottomlands during the winter. Cattle were driven to a bunch ground to be rounded up. Two roundups were held each year, usually in June to gather calves for branding and in October to select cattle for market. The South Park roundup started at Three Mile Creek east of Canon City and progressed northward as far as Fairplay. Bunch grounds included the Salt Works near Hartsel and Cross Creek north of Black Mountain. Salida, Cripple Creek, Hartsel, and Canon City were the towns where beef could be sold and supplies obtained.[38]

In 1914, Park County reported 173,917 acres of grazing land. Demand arising from the country's entry into World War I kept cattle prices high. Consumer demand encouraged the

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[35]**Rocky Mountain News**, 21 February 1880, 5; Griswold and Griswold, 64; Benson, 97; Bright, 68; Simmons, 219; Water Case 1636, 495, 505, 518; Epperson, 101; **Denver Times**, 13 August 1901, 5, 15 August 1901, 12, 6 September 1901, 10, 16 September 1901, 8.

[36]Goff and McCaffree, 251-252.

[37]Everett, **Cattle Cavalcade**, 348.

[38]George Everett recorded the last "real" roundup in Park County was in 1927. Everett and Hutchinson, 246 and 263; Peake, 254; and Everett, Cattle Cavalcade, 347.

continual development of better breeds. The nation's taste for beef reached an unprecedented level during the war years, surpassing what the cattlemen could supply. As a result, cattlemen sold all the cattle they raised, and beef commanded the highest prices in the industry's history. George Everett recalled that the largest South Park roundup he worked on was just before World War I when the government was requesting that stockmen produce all the cattle possible to provide meat for the military. During the war, some stockraisers received deferments and were advised they could best serve the country by producing food.[39]

A peak year for cattle production came in 1919, followed by a 60 percent reduction in cattle and grain prices during the following three years. Once again, climatic conditions were not favorable to the industry, which faced severe winters and summer drought. The cattle business was in distress, and land values tumbled. Ranchers increasingly depended upon feeding to improve stability. The quality of cattle underwent extensive upgrading, and the size of herds was further decreased. Park County grazing lands increased from 186,171 acres during the 1920s. During the same period, the number of cattle on the range decreased statewide.[40]

Stock-raising homesteads of 320 acres were taken up in large numbers in South Park after World War I. World War service time was applied to the period required for establishing residence. A number of homesteaders took up land around Elkhorn and Trump in Park County. Farmers in the vicinity of Trump raised potatoes and some grain. The Trump, Elkhorn, and Pleasant Valley schools opened mostly due to the influx of these homesteaders. Many of these new agriculturalists had failed by the late 1930s, helped along by a potato blight. Others left the area as jobs became available elsewhere.[41]

By the 1920s, the slogan of South Park was "Eat More Lamb!" and the area was recognized as one of the leading wool and mutton producers in the West. The sheep industry was described as being of "enormous proportions" in South Park, and, with a few exceptions, the sheep baron had replaced the cattle king. In 1929, about 50,000 sheep were reported to be grazing on the ranges of the Park, compared to about 15,000 head of cattle, mostly Herefords. Sheepherders from New Mexico arrived yearly to care for the sheep in their mountain pastures and to shear wool. The yearly output of wool in Park County was estimated at almost 400,000 pounds, and at least 40,000 lambs were being shipped annually.[42]

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[39]Salma A. Waters, ed., **Colorado Year Book, 1962-1964** (Denver: Colorado State Planning Division, 1964), 131; and Everett and Hutchinson, 201.

[40]Goff and McCaffree, 276; Everett, **Cattle Cavalcade**, 348; and **Colorado Year Book**, 131.

[41]Everett, **Cattle Cavalcade**, 356-57.

[42]**Colorado Springs Gazette and Telegraph**, 7 April 1929.

Hay was an important agricultural product of South Park. This photograph shows hay being stacked at the Buckley Ranch east of Hartsel (undated, but probably in the late 1940s). SOURCE: Maybelle Buckley photographic collection.

The Park County Woolgrowers were avid boosters of sheep production during the 1920s. Officers of the organization in 1929 included Edward Mills, Harold Chalmers, and Kenneth Chalmers. Other leading sheepmen of Park County included Hollis R. Mills, Arthur Buckley, and the Singleton brothers, who were described as doing great work in promoting the industry. The woolgrowers encouraged the improvement of herds through securing better breeding stock, and expanded potential markets by advertising the quality of South Park lambs. One of the largest operators in South Park was the Colorado Land and Livestock Company (CL&LC), which was headquartered on the Hartsel Ranch. The CL&LC controlled about 80,000 acres of land and shipped approximately 5,000 sheep and about 180,000

pounds of wool each year.[43]

The nationwide economic depression of the 1930s resulted in weak agricultural markets which combined with adverse weather conditions to negatively impact the already struggling ranching sector. Ranchers entered the 1930s in poor financial circumstances, and most descended into even deeper difficulties. During the 1930s, below average rainfall and strong winds caused dust blizzards or "dusters." Severe winter weather took its toll. In November 1931, a heavy snowfall and high winds made it impossible for cattlemen to get their herds off the ranges. Many cattle died, and others survived in poor shape. Lack of rainfall in 1932 and 1933 compounded problems. In 1934, the worst drought in the history of the West occurred. Many residents left Colorado's ranches looking for better opportunities elsewhere. As farm markets declined, the debt structure for individuals frequently was too heavy, and ranches were foreclosed or auctioned for taxes.

Federal legislation initiated after the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1933 aided farmers and ranchers. In 1934, Congress passed the first comprehensive legislation to regulate grazing on unreserved public lands. The Taylor Grazing Act provided that unappropriated and unreserved public lands in the West be withdrawn from entry until their usefulness as grazing lands could be determined. The Division of Grazing was organized as part of the Department of the Interior. That agency established grazing districts and controlled the areas through licenses and fees. Colorado was divided into eight grazing districts, of which Royal Gorge District No. 5 included Chaffee, Custer, Fremont, Park, and Teller counties.[44]

Roosevelt's policies focused on relief, recovery, and reform. Agriculture received assistance from the two Agricultural Adjustment Acts which offered relief payments and production controls. During the Depression, cattlemen continued to move towards diversification and incorporated new methods and ideas into ranch life. Children practiced modern techniques of livestock raising in 4-H Clubs which they, in turn, taught to their friends and family. In 1935, rainfall was sufficient to improve range conditions, and cattle profits also rose. Bankers started to approve new loans for cattlemen. In 1936, two Granges were established near Hartsel, the Trump and the Elkhorn. The Grange focused on issues such as taxes, road improvements, and highway safety during the 1930s. By 1937, newspapers were reporting that prosperity was returning to the Colorado rangelands. Prices for cattle were edging upward, the range was not overstocked, and supplies of feed were plentiful. Sheep prices also began to increase at this time.[45]

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[43]**Colorado Springs Gazette and Telegraph**, 7 April 1929 and U.S. Census of Agriculture, Park County, Colorado.

[44]Ubbelohde, Benson, and Smith, 310; Goff and McCaffree, 192-194.

[45]Everett and Hutchinson, 204; Colorado State Grange, **Colorado State Grange History** (Westminster, Colo.: North Suburban Printing & Publishing, Inc., 1975), 23 and 113; and **Denver Post**, 14 September 1937, 31.

Full scale economic recovery came with the advent of World War II. The **WPA Guide to Colorado**, published in 1941, described South Park as an area dominated by agricultural activity: "Most of it is broken up into large ranches; wild hay for winter is cut in the lush meadows." Jefferson was indicated as a shipping point for cattle and timber. Wartime demand resulted in improved prices and new markets for agricultural products.

During most of the postwar period the number of ranches in South Park gradually diminished, and ranch acres were steadily converted to residential, recreation, and highway use. The sheep industry in South Park declined precipitously after World War II due to factors such as changing American tastes and the rise of synthetic fabrics. Long-time sheepmen such as Arthur R. Buckley sold their property to larger operators who were consolidating ranches in South Park. Changes also came to the cattle ranchers, whose efforts to insure fatter, highly marbled beef during the 1950s and leaner beef in later years reflected the ability to manipulate the production of animals to respond to consumer demand. By 1959, Park County listed 120 farms, down from 306 in 1940. In subsequent decades, sale of water rights to cities in the Denver metropolitan area profoundly limited ranching in South Park.[46]

[46]Waters, 575 and 928-929; and Goff and McCaffree, 345.

F. ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

I. Name of Property Type:

Historic Ranches and Ranching Facilities of South Park, Park County, Colorado

Subtypes: Residential Buildings
Animal Care and Crop Storage Facilities
Ranch Support Facilities
Ranch Landscape Features

Historic Context: The History of Ranching in South Park, Colorado, 1859-1950

II. Description

This property type encompasses complexes of historic resources forming districts, as well as individual buildings, structures, and sites associated with ranching and ranching facilities in South Park, Park County, Colorado. The resources were built during South Park's period of the historic ranching development, 1859-1950. Historic ranching in South Park typically included the raising of at least one of three principal products: cattle, sheep, and hay. Other agricultural goods were produced in smaller amounts and generally for local or family consumption, and included such products as horses, hogs, chickens, milk, butter, eggs, other small grains, and potatoes. Historic resources found on South Park's ranches reflect the skills and technology required to produce these products.

Types of buildings typically present on ranches in South Park include a main ranch residence; a homestead house; a bunkhouse or cabins for hired hands; a hay, cattle, horse, sheep, or dairy barn; a blacksmith shop or workshop; a carriage house or garage; equipment, vehicle, shearing, feeding, and storage sheds; and small auxiliary buildings such as icehouses, smokehouses, and outhouses. Structures frequently found on South Park ranches include irrigation systems, bins, wells, pumps and pumphouses, windmills, water tanks, dipping vats, root cellars, corrals, pens, scales, and fences. Sites include pastures, fields, and grazing lands, as well as areas where significant historical events relating to the raising of livestock or ranch-related activities took place, such as bunching grounds. Individual ranches may include any combination of these resources, and some resources had multiple functions. The types of resources categorized by property subtypes listed below are presented as examples of the resources within each subtype. It is anticipated that further studies may result in the identification of more resource types within each subtype.

Ranch properties lend themselves to study as cultural landscapes which convey the story of man's attempts to utilize and modify the environment on a day-to-day basis. The ranch

landscape may include such elements as roads, waterways, areas of natural vegetation, trails, railroad grades, irrigation systems, utility systems, geologic and scenic features, areas of varied land use, and buildings. Often, such landscapes have evolved over time and contain a large amount of acreage and a proportionally small number of buildings. The buildings are often clustered in a headquarters area.

The physical characteristics of resources found on South Park's historic ranches vary according to the date of construction, location, and function, as well as the background and financial condition of the rancher. Like their counterparts who pursued mining, pioneer ranchers generally started their operations with small, vernacular buildings, often composed of log. Because stone was plentiful in some areas, it was also employed for some construction in South Park well into the twentieth century. As milled lumber became more widely available and transportation systems improved, frame ranch buildings were clad with horizontal or vertical boards or board and batten siding. Corrugated metal was used for roofing and as protective wall cladding during the twentieth century. Although the preponderance of ranch buildings and structures were vernacular in design, residences, particularly those of the more successful ranchers, displayed elements reflecting popular architectural styles of the historic period of development. The most successful ranchers spared little expense in creating dwellings with architectural sophistication which rivaled those of the city. Although primarily vernacular in appearance, other ranch facilities often reflected the influence of the rancher's ethnic heritage through his choice of building materials and construction techniques.

Subtype: Residential Buildings

Ranchhouse. A ranchhouse was frequently more than just a home for the family, often also serving as the headquarters of a ranching operation and, in some cases, providing income through offering food and accommodations. Before hotels became widely available, early ranchhouses frequently served as stopping places for travelers on long journeys and became landmarks for visitors. Several early ranchhouses were known for their hospitality, and ranchers could supplement their agricultural income with payments from travelers. Some early ranchhouses became regular stage stops, providing food and accommodations for people and animals. Certain ranches, such as that of Samuel Hartsel, were located on major routes through South Park, and were so popular as stopping places that towns were platted at or near their sites to capitalize on the large number of visitors passing through the area.

During the days of the open range, ranches were widely scattered throughout the Park, and a few ranchers controlled huge expanses of land. While cattlemen generally lived year-round on their ranches, the more successful often sought to provide social interaction and education for their children by also maintaining homes in cities such as Colorado Springs or Denver. For those owning a city home, the ranch house was used as a family home mostly

during the summer months when school was out.

During the nineteenth century, the first dwelling to be constructed on a ranch was often built to meet the requirements of homesteading, and was generally a log or frame building, either a small cabin or larger house. As the prosperity of the rancher increased or as the family grew, the log building was expanded, or a new home was erected of milled lumber or other material. A convenient expansion of living space was accomplished by moving in an existing building and attaching it to an existing house. Some ranchhouses exhibit a variety of building materials and several periods of construction.

Ranchhouses varied in size and architectural complexity, often reflecting the prosperity of the owner in the same manner as urban dwellings. Early ranchers wanting a more sophisticated residence adopted elements of Italianate, Second Empire, or Queen Anne styles. Most ranchhouses, however, were of vernacular design, reflecting no particular architectural style. Such houses sometimes borrowed some popular architectural elements such as decorative shingles, bay windows, and porch columns or spindles. Houses of the early twentieth century also were designed in a vernacular manner or borrowed elements of popular architectural styles of the day, such as Bungalow and Craftsman influences displayed primarily in windows and porches.

Bunkhouse and Cabin. Ranch operations generally required the hiring of additional hands to help with activities such as rounding up cattle and shearing sheep. Bunkhouses were constructed to provide a sleeping area and place to relax for hired help. Such buildings were generally rectangular, of frame or log construction, with minimal exterior ornament. Some ranches provided small one-room log cabins for their workers.

Subtype: Animal Care and Crop Storage Facilities

Barn. Barns were among the most important buildings to be erected on a ranch. Barns were constructed in a variety of designs which often drew from construction techniques of the builders' ethnic heritage. Barn design varied according to the type of animal housed (horse, cow, sheep), as well as the other functions to be undertaken in the building. The buildings were usually constructed of locally available materials, such as timber or stone found on or near the ranch and were most often vernacular in design. Earliest barns were often constructed of log, with small sections of applied vertical board or board and batten siding. Some barns, such as those at the Hartsel Ranch, were constructed of both milled lumber and logs. Many barns in South Park included enormous hay lofts for storage of what was the area's primary crop. Grain could also be stored in bins in the barn. Some barns included areas for storage of farm equipment, machinery, and vehicles, and a few had bunk space for hired hands.

Chicken Coop. Chickens were often raised on ranches to provide eggs and supplemental meat, and some ranch families sold eggs for extra income. Chicken coops were generally frame buildings, rectangular in shape, with a shed roof. The buildings typically faced south and had a row of windows on the front to allow maximum penetration of sunlight. Coops often had a half-monitor roof with windows along the upper front wall for light, warmth, and ventilation.

Corral. Corral structures were erected to control and separate animals. The design and materials used for corrals varied according to construction era, available materials, and type of animal contained. Early corrals were built of logs, with some early corrals consisting simply of logs laid atop each other in a roughly circular pattern. Some corrals were square or rectangular. Log corrals were later replaced by structures which used milled wood and metal pipes. Corrals often incorporated recycled materials used as railings and gates.

Shed. A variety of sheds for storage and care of animals were constructed on a ranch. Horses and cows were often housed in the main barn or in nearby corrals and pens when gathered at the ranch headquarters. Long, rectangular structures with one open side were called loafing sheds, calving sheds, or feeders, and were built to facilitate feeding during inclement weather and to provide shelter. Hogs and sheep had separate sheds.

Subtype: Ranch Support Facilities

Blacksmith Shop/Work Shop. Small log or frame buildings were erected to house the blacksmith implements and carpentry tools essential for maintaining animals, machinery, and facilities of the ranch.

Cookhouse/Summer Kitchen. Food preparation was sometimes undertaken in a building separate from the main residence to remove heat and fire danger, especially during the summer. The summer kitchen was generally a simple, rectangular, one-story building near the rear of the ranch house. A related building was the meat house in which meat was butchered and processed.

Buggy Shed/Garage. Although many ranches stored their carriages and buggies in designated areas of the barn, some erected separate buildings to house the vehicles. The rising popularity of the automobile during the early twentieth century led to the necessity of erecting small buildings to protect cars from the elements. Garages were generally frame buildings with gable or shed roofs. A large hinged or overhead door on the front of the garage permitted the entrance and exit of the automobile.

Granary. A granary was a structure utilized to store grain. The granary was often a one-story, rectangular, frame building with studs-out construction, a shed roof, and a series of

interior divisions for storage of different types of grains.

Icehouse. Ice cut from local ponds was stored in small insulated structures for use during warmer periods.

Outhouse/Privy. Before the installation of indoor plumbing, outhouses were universal elements of ranch complexes. Privies were very small, usually single room buildings, generally of frame construction, with a shed or gable roof, a single door, and a vent opening. Larger ranches often had more than one of these buildings. Locally, these buildings were often referred to as "chicksales."

Root Cellar. Root cellars were erected by ranch families to store vegetables and other perishable foods for future use. Root cellars were usually placed underground or dug into the side of a hill to take advantage of cooler temperatures and dark conditions. Although such structures were generally utilitarian in design, at least one family in South Park erected a finely crafted stone root cellar.

Shed. Most ranches were located some distance from established commercial centers, and support buildings included a variety of storage sheds to house farm implements, vehicles, and supplies (such as coal and wood) necessary for ranch activities.

Silo. Silos were apparently rarely built in South Park. Silos were erected to store green or fermented fodder and first appeared during the second half of the nineteenth century. Silo styles evolved over time.

Smokehouse. Smokehouses were small structures where meat was smoked for its preservation. The smokehouse had a tall gable roof and a single door. A fire was maintained in the center of the structure, and a chimney or wall vents allowed smoke to escape.

Well, Pumphouse, or Springhouse. Access to water was one of the most important considerations in the location of a ranch, and the well was an essential component of the ranch facilities. Springhouses were erected to protect the water from animals and other contamination and to provide a place for food storage. The spring or pumphouse was usually a small building of vernacular design with a shed or gable roof and single door. The building generally maintained a cool temperature as a result of water flowing through it and could also be used to store certain types of food.

Windmill. Windmills were utilized to pump water from beneath the ground. Windmills were originally built on a wood frame, while those erected after 1890 were built on twenty-five to thirty foot steel towers.

Subtype: Ranch Landscape Features[47]

Bunching Ground. During twice annual roundups, designated bunching ground sites were utilized as areas to gather animals. The Salt Works was a bunching ground in South Park.

Domestic Landscape. The area immediately surrounding a ranchhouse was usually landscaped with grass, bushes, flowers, or other vegetation. The landscaped area was generally enclosed with fencing to prevent animals from trampling plantings. Borders dividing planted areas were sometimes constructed of stone or concrete. As in fences, recycled materials were often used in landscaping around residences.

Fences. Fences were erected to keep animals within certain areas or to keep animals or people out of particular areas. Early fences utilized logs for posts and crosspieces. Barbed wire provided an economical and efficient material for fence construction. The wire was twisted in various ways to hold barbs which deterred animals. The wire became widely popular in Colorado in the 1880s. Other types of fences were constructed utilizing woven wire or mesh, as well as chainlink. Wood fenceposts are still common in Colorado, as are metal posts.

Hay Fields, Pastures, and Grazing Land. Hay fields are distinguished from pastures as they were generally irrigated to raise hay as a crop, while pastures were predominantly for animal forage. Grazing land was an area of uncultivated grassland where cattle and sheep were turned out to feed.

Irrigation Systems. Access to water was a critical element in the location of every ranch. The rivers and creeks which flow through South Park provided drinking and bathing water for people and animals and ensured sufficient moisture for crops such as hay. Ranchers claimed land along waterways such as the South Platte River, and they also constructed necessary irrigation systems to provide for these needs. Early ditches were constructed using scrapers and teams of horses.

Trails, Ranch Roads, and Railroad Grades. Local cattle trails were established for movement of animals as early as the 1860s. Roads and trails through ranches were completed to facilitate travel between the ranch headquarters and more distant ranchlands, for movement of herds, and to link with county roads. Railroads constructed through South Park beginning in 1879 crossed ranchlands. Railroad grades still mark some railroad routes through South

[47]Very small elements such as scratching posts and feeding stations cause significant visual changes in aerial appearance of the landscape due to attracting livestock and the resulting soil compaction. These elements should be noted as a component of a ranch site, but are not substantial enough to be categorized as a property subtype.

Park.

III. Significance

South Park ranches and ranch facilities may be eligible to the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A, B, C, and/or D.

Ranches and ranching facilities may be eligible to the National Register under Criterion A, for their association with the history of agriculture in South Park. The ranches of South Park are associated with growth of the livestock industry in Colorado, and the history of individual ranches in the area reflects the impact of regional and national patterns and events in agriculture. Major themes in the history of ranching, such as the days of the open range, the development of water systems, the life of the cattle baron, and the expansion of sheepraising are all intricately woven into the history of South Park's ranches. Ranching was one of the earliest industries in South Park and brought some of the first permanent residents to the area. The products of ranching supported the county's mining camps which were themselves an early and important source of development. Ranching also provided impetus for the establishment of small service and supply communities, and became the county's economic mainstay after the decline of mining.

Ranching resources may also be eligible to the National Register under Criterion B, for their association with prominent individuals. Some of the ranchers in South Park, such as Samuel Hartsel, played a significant role in the development of the livestock industry in Colorado, as well as that of the local community. Prominent individuals such as Hartsel also impacted other sectors of the economy and contributed to the progress of the area by establishing other businesses and serving as community leaders. These influential ranching citizens were involved in the educational, cultural, social, religious, and civic lives of the community.

Ranching and ranching facilities in South Park may be eligible to the National Register under Criterion C, for their representation of the architecture, construction techniques, building materials, technology, and workmanship of ranches. A few ranches may qualify under Criterion C, for representation of the work of a master architect or builder. Ranches may also qualify for representing a distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction. Ranches often contain a variety of building types reflecting varied dates, construction techniques, and building materials. These ranches exhibit the change and evolution of architectural styles and agricultural technology which was typical of ranches in South Park. Some of the buildings on South Park ranches are excellent examples of historic architectural styles, and other facilities are important representative of methods of construction employed by ranchers.

Historic archaeological sites associated with this property type may also be eligible to the

National Register under Criterion D, for their potential to yield important information. Sites which were part of long established ranches may reflect the development of agriculture in South Park, the broad patterns of settlement, and the lifestyles of ranching families in the region.

IV. Registration Requirements

South Park ranches and ranching facilities are eligible to the National Register as historic districts or as individual buildings, structures, or sites. Minimum eligibility requirements for such resources are: construction within the Period of Significance (1859-1950) and retention of historic integrity (historic qualities including location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association) sufficient to convey the property's historic character during the period for which it is being nominated.

Ranches and ranching facilities may qualify under Criterion A, if they are associated with historic events or activities significant to the history of South Park. Only those resources which are excellent representatives of broad historic themes or are most closely associated with historic events or activities will qualify under Criterion A. Integrity of materials, scale, workmanship, stylistic details, and construction technique are important for these resources. The reuse of buildings for varied purposes is an aspect of ranching history. Buildings altered within the historic period to fulfill functions other than the original intended use will be considered to maintain historic associations and integrity and will be evaluated as contributing to a district.

Some ranches and ranch facilities may qualify under Criterion B, for their association with important persons. These resources would be significant if a long and close association with a prominent person could be established. The prominent person with whom the resource is associated must have played an influential role in the history of ranching in South Park or the larger region. If nominated under Criterion B, the property should reflect the historic period of association with the prominent person.

To qualify under Criterion C, the components of a ranch should maintain substantial integrity relating to the period of significance under which the complex is being nominated. If a ranch is nominated as a district, the individual elements of the district may be less significant than the entity represented by the complex as a whole. In this case, some elements of the complex may reflect alterations resulting from continued operation of the ranch over time and some noncontributing elements may be present. Additions or modifications must not have impaired the historic character of the majority of resources, and must be non-intrusive and of similar scale to the original resource. Historic landscape features comprising the ranch setting should also retain integrity for the historic period of development.

Historic archaeological properties which were the site of agricultural operations which lasted many years and have a likelihood of retaining undisturbed resources such as historic trash dumps and outhouses may have potential to provide information about ranching lifestyles and may be eligible under Criterion D. If a site has not been totally excavated, it must possess the potential to answer important questions relating to the history of ranching in South Park.

Buildings or structures within a ranch complex or standing alone may be individually eligible if they maintain historic integrity and have either historical or architectural significance. For example, a ranchhouse could be significant if it is associated with important historical events or themes, is associated with a prominent person, or if it is a good representative of a particular architectural style, builder, or type of construction. A barn may be eligible if it is the most significant remaining building associated with an important ranch, or is a good representative of a particular type of construction or style. Some structures of secondary importance to a ranch might qualify as eligible if they are excellent examples of a particular type of construction, or if representative of ethnic or geographic influences.

Because it was not unusual for some of the buildings and structures on ranches to be recycled and moved, original location is not an absolute requirement for eligibility. Moving ranch buildings and obtaining buildings which originally had other functions for ranch use were common practices in agricultural enterprises. However, for a building or structure to be eligible or contributing to a district, it must have been built and/or relocated during the Period of Significance.

Among the most significant resources associated with ranching in South Park are complexes of buildings which reflect the growth and development of the industry over time and the full range of activities associated with ranching in the area. Historic ranches which include a variety of buildings and which encompass an historic setting which reflects the development of the cultural landscape are extremely valuable to the understanding of the history of the region.

G. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Park County, named for its splendid valley, was one of the seventeen original territorial counties created in 1861. Park County is situated in the center of the state of Colorado. The county's shape is irregular in form and its boundaries encompass almost 1.5 million acres of land. The topography of the county is mountainous, except in South Park, the beautiful flat valley near the center of the county. The altitude of the county ranges from about 7,200 feet where the Platte River crosses into Jefferson County to more than 14,000 feet on some of its western mountain summits. The Pike National Forest occupies a large part of the county. The headwaters of the South Platte River lie in Park County.[48]

South Park, once an inland lake, is a level mountain valley, about fifty miles long and thirty-five miles wide occupying the center of the county. Within South Park, altitudes vary from 8,500 feet to 10,000 feet. On the west side of the Park are the salt springs which attracted wild game, Native Americans, and mountain men. These springs led the Spanish to call the area "Valle Salado." French explorers and trappers referred to it as "Bayou Salade" and Americans as "Bayou Salado." The term South Park was first used in the 1840s by hunters who traveled through the chain of large, level Colorado mountain valleys rimmed by mountains and abundant with herds of game: North Park, Middle Park, South Park, and the San Luis Valley.

South Park is bounded on the east by the Tarryall Mountains and the Puma Hills, on the south by Thirty-Nine Mile Mountain and Black Mountain, on the southwest by the Buffalo Peaks and Kaufman Ridge, on the west by the Mosquito Range, on the northwest by the Ten Mile Range, and on the north by the Park Range (once called the Snowy Range). The Mosquito Range includes four mountains over 14,000 feet: Lincoln, Bross, Democrat, and Sherman. Red Hill and Reinecker Ridge, low ridges running north and south, form divisions within the Park, as does Indian Mountain. A number of passes were used as prehistoric and historic routes of travel to and from South Park.[49]

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[48]Charles W. Henderson, **Mining in Colorado** (Washington, D.C.: U.S.G.S. Professional Paper 138), 24; Salma A. Waters, ed., **Colorado Year Book, 1962-1964**, (Denver: Colorado State Planning Division, 1964), 928.

[49]Virginia McConnell Simmons, **Bayou Salado: The Story of South Park** (Denver: Sage Books, 1966), 14-16; and Mel Griffiths and Lynell Rubright, **Colorado: A Geography**, (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1983), 25.

H. SUMMARY OF IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION METHODS

In 1995, the South Park Heritage Resources Area Board of Park County, Colorado, commissioned a "South Park Heritage Resource Area Study." That report identified "key resources that express South Park's heritage through time." The project examined the nine hundred-square mile South Park Basin, identified heritage themes, and gathered data on resources which were then prioritized in terms of conservation efforts. Heritage themes were identified as the framework for future programs. Basic information concerning each theme was compiled into brief narratives as part of the final project report.

In 1998-1999 a "South Park Strategic Conservation and Heritage Tourism Plan" developed a historic preservation plan and strategic conservation and economic opportunities plan for heritage tourism in South Park. Part of that project was the development of four historic contexts related to previously identified heritage themes. One of the contexts completed was "Ranching." The ranching contexts created as part of this document are based upon the earlier study. A second part of the 1998-1999 project was the completion of an intensive survey of three historic ranches in South Park. The ranches were selected because they combined significant historic associations, significant historic architecture, and interested owners. The survey evaluated the potential National Register eligibility for individual resources and districts on the ranches which might be nominated under this Multiple Property Documentation Form. In subsequent years, other ranches in South Park will be surveyed and evaluated, and eligible resources will also be nominated under this form.

As one of the most historic areas of Colorado, South Park has been described and documented by a wide variety of explorers, historians, scientists, tourists, and others who have valued its natural beauty and historic heritage. In 1866, artist A.E. Matthews waxed poetic in his description of South Park: "The salubrious, invigorating air, the pure, cool water, the cool but equable temperature, the unequalled scenery of mountain and plain, the trout and the game will make the alps to pale before incomparably greater attractions." By 1880, the **Rocky Mountain News** was stating that "hereabouts is historic ground" in its descriptions of the mining camps of the area. For decades, professional historians and history buffs have been fascinated with the story of South Park, and have produced volumes of information about its history. Among the most informative works of recent years is that of Virginia McConnell Simmons, whose **Bayou Salado: The Story of South Park** is the most comprehensive history of the region published to date. Books specifically addressing ranching in South Park include: Harry Epperson's **Colorado As I Saw It** and George Everett's **Cattle Cavalcade in Central Colorado** and **Under the Angel of Shavano** (with Wendell Hutchinson).

The Park County Library in Fairplay houses published histories of the South Park area. The Park County Assessor's Office maintains valuable maps of the county, as well as historic

land use and ownership information relating to specific properties. The Park County Clerk and Recorder's Office has plats of townsites and information on road and irrigation systems. Current and former residents of Park County supplied extensive information about specific ranches and general themes in the history of South Park ranching. Few ranchers living in South Park during the Period of Significance were located.

The Colorado Historical Society's (CHS) Stephen Hart Library houses historic maps and photographs of South Park, as well as the largest collection of historic newspapers in the state. The CHS Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (OAHP) maintains copies of cultural resource survey forms, historic contexts, National Register nominations, and other reports. A computerized file search for Park County resources was acquired from the OAHP and relevant survey forms were examined.

The Denver Public Library Western History Department is a repository of published books, newspapers, photographs, maps, and clippings on South Park. The general holdings of the library were also accessed for publications about the general history of ranching in Colorado.

The geographic area for the historic context in this nomination was defined by the boundaries of the 1998-1999 survey and context work as South Park, Park County, Colorado. The Period of Significance begins with the date of the earliest potential ranching resources in the area and ends with 1950. The ending date was chosen because ranching continues today in South Park, and no more specific date appropriately ends the historic period.

The discussion of property types and subtypes was based on the review of previously surveyed ranching resources within South Park, various published documents, the intensive examination of three historic ranches in 1998, and the expertise of Park County residents who reviewed the context. Because historic ranches often encompass a number of buildings, structures, and sites, the broadest encompassing property type was selected, with subtypes divided by function. Under each subtype, examples of related facilities which might be individually identified were listed. The examples were based upon completed surveys and are not the only kinds of resources which might relate to each subtype.

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