
National Park Service
Cultural Landscapes Inventory
2002



McGraw Ranch
Rocky Mountain National Park

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Inventory Unit Summary & Site Plan

Inventory Summary

The Cultural Landscapes Inventory Overview:

CLI General Information:

Purpose and Goals of the CLI

The Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI), a comprehensive inventory of all cultural landscapes in the national park system, is one of the most ambitious initiatives of the National Park Service (NPS) Park Cultural Landscapes Program. The CLI is an evaluated inventory of all landscapes having historical significance that are listed on or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, or are otherwise managed as cultural resources through a public planning process and in which the NPS has or plans to acquire any legal interest. The CLI identifies and documents each landscape's location, size, physical development, condition, landscape characteristics, character-defining features, as well as other valuable information useful to park management. Cultural landscapes become approved CLIs when concurrence with the findings is obtained from the park superintendent and all required data fields are entered into a national database. In addition, for landscapes that are not currently listed on the National Register and/or do not have adequate documentation, concurrence is required from the State Historic Preservation Officer or the Keeper of the National Register.

The CLI, like the List of Classified Structures, assists the NPS in its efforts to fulfill the identification and management requirements associated with Section 110(a) of the National Historic Preservation Act, National Park Service Management Policies (2006), and Director's Order #28: Cultural Resource Management. Since launching the CLI nationwide, the NPS, in response to the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), is required to report information that respond to NPS strategic plan accomplishments. Two GPRA goals are associated with the CLI: bringing certified cultural landscapes into good condition (Goal 1a7) and increasing the number of CLI records that have complete, accurate, and reliable information (Goal 1b2B).

Scope of the CLI

The information contained within the CLI is gathered from existing secondary sources found in park libraries and archives and at NPS regional offices and centers, as well as through on-site reconnaissance of the existing landscape. The baseline information collected provides a comprehensive look at the historical development and significance of the landscape, placing it in context of the site's overall significance. Documentation and analysis of the existing landscape identifies character-defining characteristics and features, and allows for an evaluation of the landscape's overall integrity and an assessment of the landscape's overall condition. The CLI also provides an illustrative site plan that indicates major features within the inventory unit. Unlike cultural landscape reports, the CLI does not provide management recommendations or

treatment guidelines for the cultural landscape.

Inventory Unit Description:

The McGraw Ranch is an agricultural and recreational complex on the eastern edge of Rocky Mountain National Park, six miles northeast of Estes Park, CO and 76 miles northwest of Denver. The ranch once extended over 1280 acres, but the current inventory is concerned only with the area immediately surrounding the ranch buildings, an area of about ten acres. The property is located in Cow Creek Valley at an elevation of approximately 7,880'. The Roosevelt National Forest extends to the north and forested hills and rock formations surround the site.

Originally, the ranch was settled as a cattle ranch. In 1936 it was converted to a guest ranch and was run successfully as a guest facility until 1988. In the intervening years, pieces of the ranch were sold, until in 1988, the guest ranch encompassed only 220 acres. At that time, the National Park Service bought the property. Previously, the National Park Service had purchased a 480 acre parcel on the west side of the ranch and a 40 acre parcel on the south side. Therefore, the National Park Service currently owns 740 acres of the original 1280.

The developed area of the ranch lies on the north side of Cow Creek. A gravel access road extends from McGraw Ranch Road across the creek into the ranch complex. The road provides access to the barn and the main house and then continues through the buildings toward the west, providing access to service buildings and guest cabins. There are approximately 25 buildings on the site including a main ranch house/lodge, several guest cabins, a barn and stables, and a variety of utility and storage sheds. Irrigation ditches run through the property parallel to and north of Cow Creek. The lower ditch feeds into a pond which sits below the guest cabins. Eleven of the buildings and three structures including the pond and the ditches were listed in the National Register of Historic Places on September 17, 1998.

The buildings are clustered according to their functions. The barn, corral, stables, and storage sheds are located together behind the main house and face onto a large open field on the east side of the buildings. The main house, bunkhouse, log cabin, cook's cabin, ice house, and workers' cabin are clustered together across from the barn and close to the ranch entry. Guest cabins are set in a row overlooking the pond and creek in the front, and backing up to the entry road for easy access and parking.

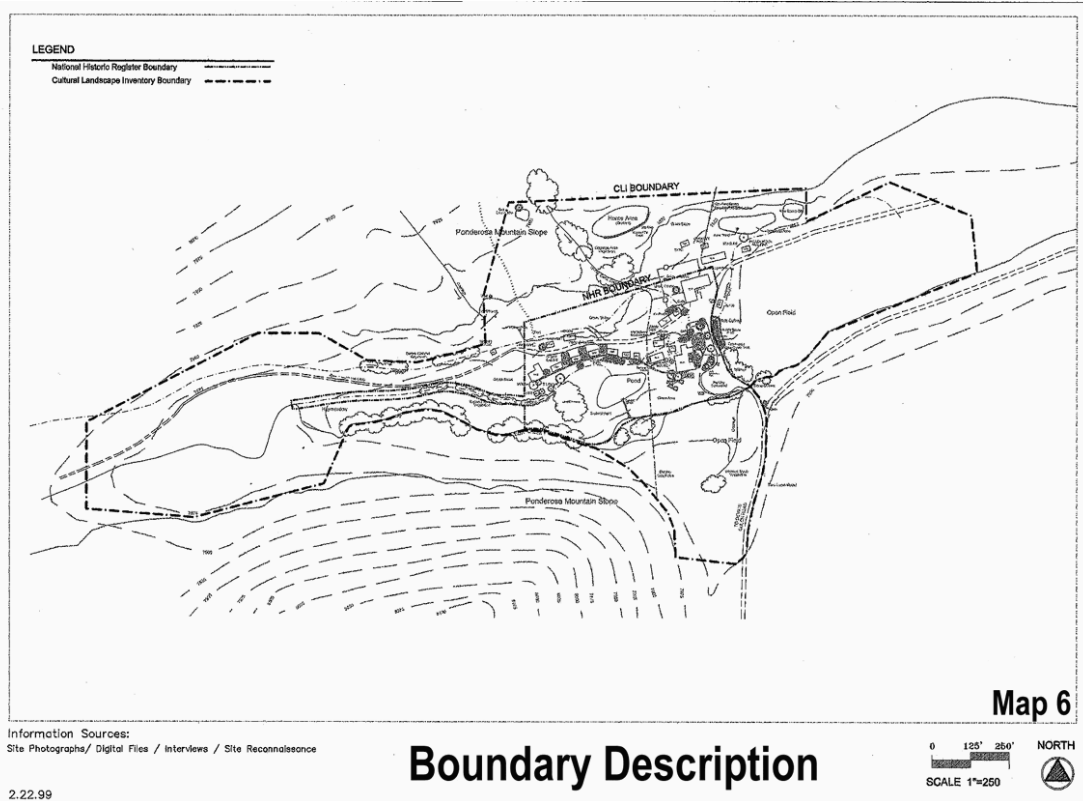
Pathways connect the cabins to each other and to the main lodge where the dining rooms were located. Large spruce trees mark the entry drive and provide separation between some of the cabins. Deciduous trees, mostly Balm of Gileads, provide shade and relief around the main house, bunkhouse and log cabin. Shrubs line the lower ditch and grow near some of the cabins. Above the buildings, a ponderosa forest with grassy understory extends up to Pulpit Rock, which is a striking backdrop feature. Below the buildings, the creek meanders through a variety of riparian shrubs. Surrounding the building complex are mostly open meadows which originally were used for pastures and hay fields. Beyond the meadows are forested valley side slopes which provide a sense of enclosure and isolation.

The period of significance for the ranch, 1884 to 1948, encompasses its early years as a cattle ranch and extends into the years when it functioned as a guest ranch. Both periods are important to the ranch's significance; the original layout reflects the organization and needs of a working ranch, while later additions clearly serve guest related functions. The condition of the landscape is good with an intact

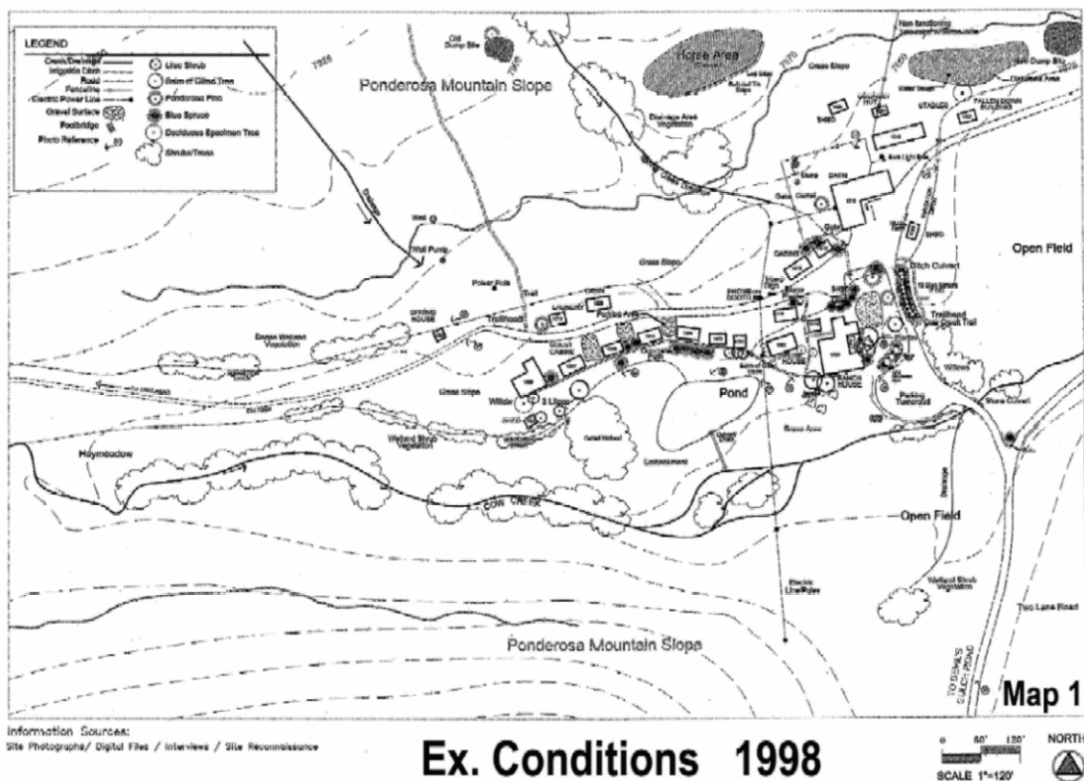
McGraw Ranch
Rocky Mountain National Park

setting and buildings with historic integrity. Some buildings and additions from the 1980s have somewhat reduced the historic character of the property. The layout of the property, the historic buildings, and the mostly unchanged setting give the property significance as a representative example of both a western cattle ranch and a dude ranch.

Site Plan



Site plan showing boundary addressed in this CLI. Source: Shapins Associates.



Site plan showing core area of McGraw Ranch, 1998. Source: Shapins Associates.

Property Level and CLI Numbers

Inventory Unit Name:	McGraw Ranch
Property Level:	Component Landscape
CLI Identification Number:	890200
Parent Landscape:	890028

Park Information

Park Name and Alpha Code:	Rocky Mountain National Park -ROMO
Park Organization Code:	1520
Park Administrative Unit:	Rocky Mountain National Park

CLI Hierarchy Description

The McGraw Ranch was not divided into subunits, and for purposes of the CLI, the ranch remains as one cohesive landscape. The landscape does, however, contain many contributing features.

Concurrence Status

Inventory Status: Complete

Completion Status Explanatory Narrative:

The inventory was completed by Shapins Associates using historic information, site visits and personal interviews with former ranch residents. Historic research had been previously conducted by Laurie and Thomas Simmons (Front Range Research Associates) as part of the National Register of Historic Places Registration process in 1998. In addition to reviewing this information, historic photos and other primary source materials pertaining to ranch history and evolution of the ranch landscape were used to develop the cultural landscape inventory. Two site visits were conducted for documenting site conditions on 3 November and 10 November 1998. Most significantly, ranch residents Ruth McGraw (resident 1946-73) and her daughter, Fran McGraw Grooters (resident 1948-73) were interviewed on 10 November 1998. These interviews took place as part of a ranch site tour and in the womens' homes. The McGraw family contributed several pre-1940, family photographs in this effort.

Shapins Associates completed the CLI in 1999; however, the document was not submitted for concurrence until 2000 and 2002.

Concurrence Status:

Park Superintendent Concurrence:	Yes
Park Superintendent Date of Concurrence:	09/26/2002
National Register Concurrence:	Eligible -- SHPO Consensus Determination
Date of Concurrence Determination:	06/01/2000

National Register Concurrence Narrative:

The Colorado SHPO concurred that the McGraw Ranch Cultural Landscape, as detailed in this CLI, is eligible for listing in the National Register. This concurrence was given June 1, 2000. An amended National Register nomination has not been prepared, however.

Concurrence Graphic Information:



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Rocky Mountain National Park
Estes Park, Colorado 80517

IN REPLY REFER TO:
H4217 (ROMO)

APR 25 2000

Ms. Georgianna Contiguglia
State Historic Preservation Officer
Colorado Historical Society
1300 Broadway
Denver, CO 80203

Reference: Determination of Eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places for the McGraw Ranch Cultural Landscape.

Dear Ms. Contiguglia:

We are requesting your concurrence in a Determination of Eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places of the McGraw Ranch Cultural Landscape, located in Rocky Mountain National Park. As you know, the McGraw Ranch Historic District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1998. A Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI) was completed the following year, and proposes an expansion of the historic district to include several landscape features, including three pastures historically used by the McGraw family.

The CLI was completed using the new National Park Service automated inventory system called Cultural Landscape Automated Management Systems (CLAIMS). The inventory was completed by Shapins Associates of Boulder under a contract with the Intermountain Support Office in Denver. Draft versions of the CLI were reviewed by Dale Heckendorn in your office and it was decided that the CLI included most all of the Colorado inventory requirements, plus additional specific information focusing on landscapes. Mr. Heckendorn's early comments have been included in the final version of the CLI.

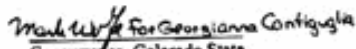
We have asked that Tom Keohan, with our Intermountain Support Office in Denver to deliver a copy of the CLI report, including photographs and maps for the McGraw Ranch Cultural Landscape to your office.

We appreciate your past and ongoing technical assistance in our efforts to continuously update our historic resources inventory at Rocky Mountain National Park.

Sincerely,


Durand Jones
Superintendent

cc: Dale Heckendorn


Mark W. For Georgianna Contiguglia
Concurrence, Colorado State
Historic Preservation Officer
6/1/2000
Date

Colorado SHPO concurrence on the McGraw Ranch CLI, 6/1/2000.

Concurrence:

I concur with the completion status, condition assessment, management category, eligibility of boundary area for National Register, and recommended stabilization measures identified in the McGraw Ranch Cultural Landscape Inventory prepared May, 1999.

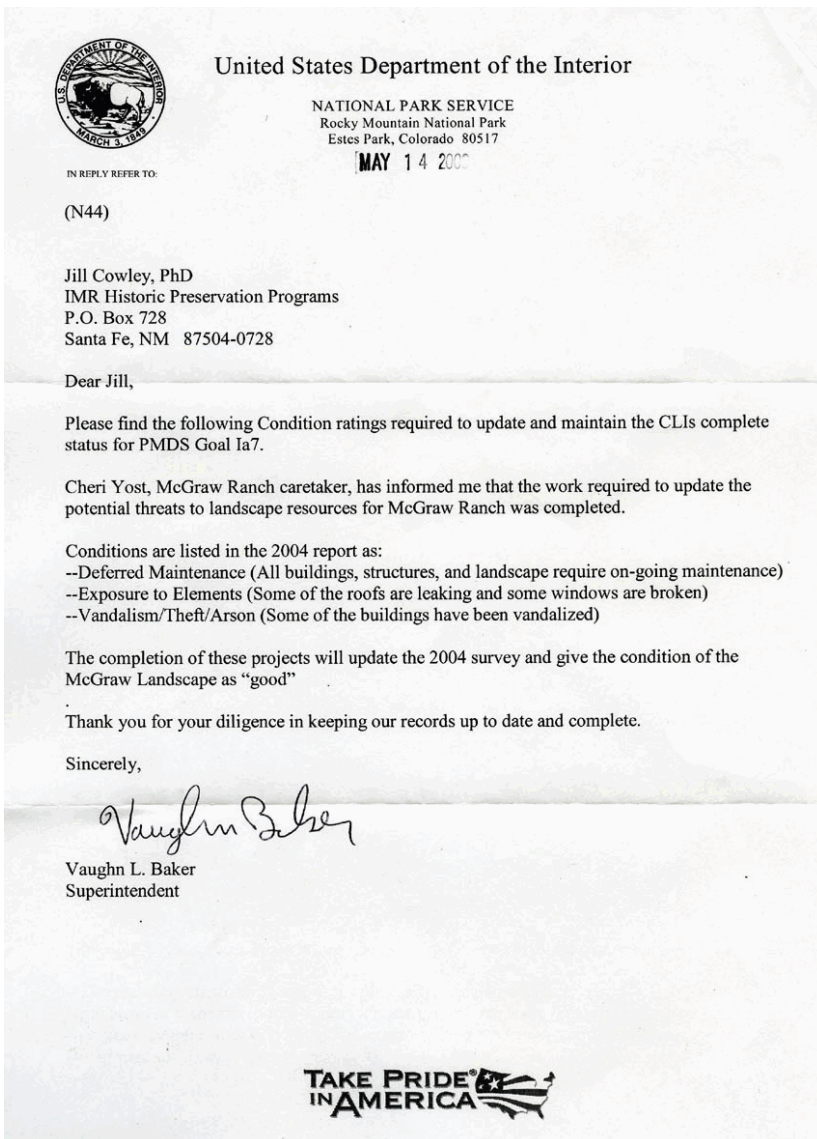
Vaughn Baker

Vaughn L. Baker, Superintendent, Rocky Mountain National Park

9-26-02

Date

McGraw Ranch CLI Superintendent concurrence, 9/26/2002.



Condition Assessment, 2009 update: May 14 2009 letter from Superintendent Baker indicating McGraw Ranch still in good condition.

Revisions Impacting Change in Concurrence:

Other

Revision Narrative:

Edited text to correct typos, added boundary site plan, clarified image sources, replaced cover image, deleted original analysis photos (which were duplicates of history images), and uploaded new analysis photos, May and July 2012.

Geographic Information & Location Map

Inventory Unit Boundary Description:

The boundary that has been delineated for the Cultural Landscape Inventory is larger than the National Register boundary because the CLI looked at areas of the landscape beyond just the site of the historic buildings. The CLI boundary was expanded to encompass both the original dump site dating to the 1880s, and the dump site that was established in 1936. The CLI boundary was also shifted to include the entire corral and the row of blue spruce trees on the east side of the entry drive. Because the open fields to the south, east and west of the ranch buildings were used in the historic period for haying and livestock pasture, they were also included in the CLI boundary. Both the CLI boundary and the National Register boundary are drawn on Map # 6 - Boundary Description Map - included in the Supplemental Information Section.

The CLI boundary consists of a large, irregular polygon which includes the ranch building area and the three main meadows near the ranch buildings. Beginning at the eastern edge of the McGraw Ranch access road over the center of Cow Creek, the boundary extends east along Cow Creek approximately 1000' to the bottom of the east meadow; thence north approximately 220'; thence northwest approximately 350' to the bottom of the valley slope; thence west 350' along the irrigation ditch to a point just east of the dump site; thence north 120'; thence west 1150'; thence south 380' to a point just west of the well; thence south 180' to a point 10' north of the centerline of the upper irrigation ditch; thence west paralleling the centerline of the irrigation ditch along its north side approximately 450'; thence west approximately 1200' following the base of the slope to where the valley turns gently south; thence south 350' to the base of the slope on the opposite valley side; thence east approximately 950' along the base of the slope to where the meadow narrows; thence northeast approximately 200' to Cow Creek; thence east along the centerline of Cow Creek 1000' to where the valley opens to the south; thence southeast along the base of the slope 550'; thence east 250' to McGraw Ranch Road; thence north along the east side of the road to the point of beginning.

State and County:

State: CO

County: Larimer County

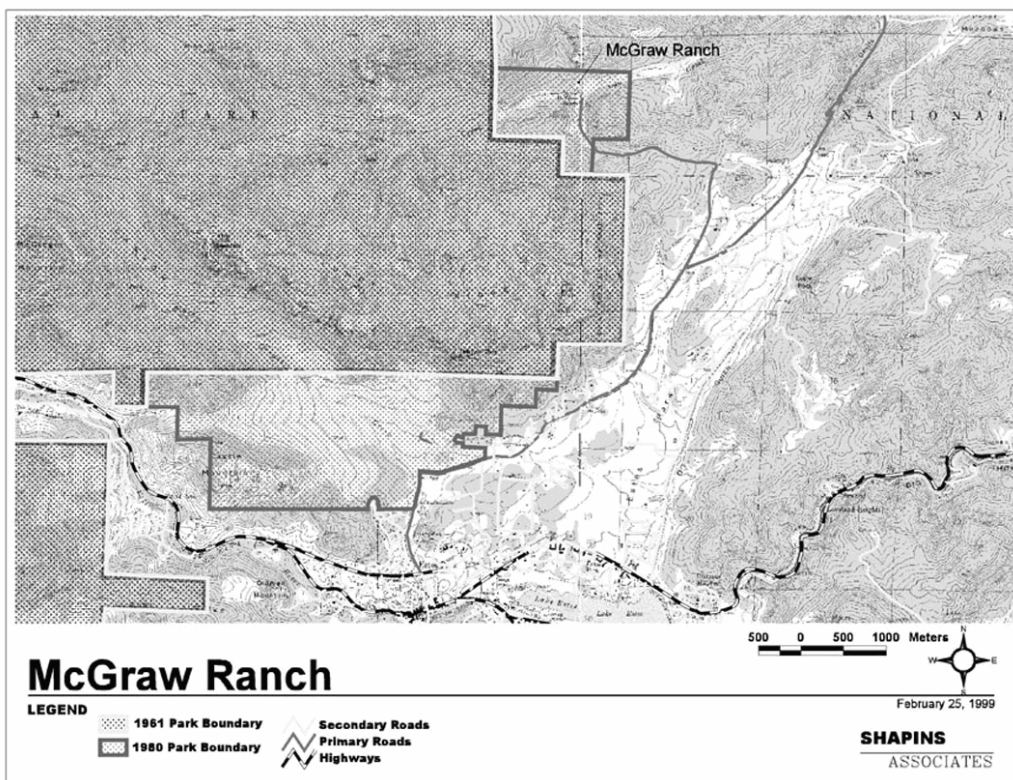
Size (Acres): 10.00

Boundary UTMS:

UTM Zone:	13
UTM Easting:	457,175
UTM Northing:	4,475,590
UTM Zone:	13
UTM Easting:	457,770
UTM Northing:	4,475,650
UTM Zone:	13
UTM Easting:	457,770
UTM Northing:	4,475,720
UTM Zone:	13
UTM Easting:	456,940
UTM Northing:	4,475,360
UTM Zone:	13
UTM Easting:	457,510
UTM Northing:	4,475,410
UTM Zone:	13
UTM Easting:	457,588
UTM Northing:	4,475,410
UTM Zone:	13
UTM Easting:	457,140
UTM Northing:	4,475,480
UTM Zone:	13
UTM Easting:	457,340
UTM Northing:	4,475,480
UTM Zone:	13
UTM Easting:	457,345
UTM Northing:	4,475,510
UTM Zone:	13

UTM Easting:	456,910
UTM Northing:	4,475,510
UTM Zone:	13
UTM Easting:	457,590
UTM Northing:	4,475,550
UTM Zone:	13
UTM Easting:	457,350
UTM Northing:	4,475,655

Location Map:



McGraw Ranch Context Map. Source: Shapins Associates.

Regional Context:

Type of Context: Cultural

Description:

The McGraw Ranch was initially settled when the first homestead in the Cow Creek Valley was staked in the 1880's at the site of the current ranch buildings. By the turn of the century, the homestead was part of a larger cattle ranch that comprised approximately 1,280 acres. Large cattle ranches were a dominant land use in the region during that time. In the middle of the 20th century, the ranch evolved into a guest ranch, providing a western experience for visitors from all over the country. Thus the ranch typifies the cultural history of the region as it changed from primarily a ranching economy to a more tourist based economy.

Type of Context: Physiographic

Description:

The ranch is located within the Rocky Mountains, nestled in a sloping valley of the Front Range. Cow Creek, a tributary of the North Fork of the Big Thompson River flows through the property. The geology of the area consists of igneous and metamorphic rock and the ranch area appears to have good soil deposition. The ground cover is mostly grasses and herbaceous plants with cottonwood, willows, and spruce in wet areas near the creek, and ponderosa pine on drier south-facing slopes. The general area is in the upper montane life zone, forested mostly with ponderosa pine and mixed conifer forest (Intensive Surface Survey, RMNP Archives, 12.17.93).

Type of Context: Political

Description:

The ranch site, which is the focus of this Cultural Landscape Inventory, as part of the 220 acres that the National Park Service bought in 1988, is now owned and administered by the National Park Service. The 220 acres were added to Rocky Mountain National Park so that the Park boundary now encompasses the ranch. The ranch is located within the political boundaries of Larimer County, Colorado, six miles northeast of the town of Estes Park. It is served by electric and phone service from the town.

Management Unit: Rocky Mountain National Park Unit

Management Information

General Management Information

Management Category: Should be Preserved and Maintained

Management Category Date: 09/01/1998

Management Category Explanatory Narrative:

McGraw Ranch is eligible for listing on the National Register and should be preserved and maintained. Superintendent concurrence was received 9/26/2002.

Agreements, Legal Interest, and Access

Management Agreement:

Type of Agreement:

NPS Legal Interest:

Type of Interest: Fee Simple

Public Access:

Type of Access: Unrestricted

Adjacent Lands Information

Do Adjacent Lands Contribute? Yes

Adjacent Lands Description:

The lands within the Cow Creek valley that form the viewshed from within the ranch complex make up the contributing adjacent lands. The views from the ranch are currently of open, undeveloped land and are substantially the same as they have been since the ranch was founded in the 1800s. The only intrusion into the view is the road which leads from the ranch entrance along the edge of the valley to the east, and the partial views of a home that has been built down the valley.

National Register Information

Existing National Register Status

National Register Landscape Documentation:

Entered Inadequately Documented

National Register Explanatory Narrative:

The Colorado State Historic Preservation Office determined that McGraw Ranch was eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places on October 15, 1990. Subsequently, the Keeper of the National Register also determined the property eligible for listing on June 10, 1993.

In 1998, documentation and research was performed by Front Range Research Associates, Inc. of Denver, Colorado, in order to prepare a National Register Registration Form for the ranch. On September 17, 1998, the McGraw Ranch was officially listed in the National Register as a historic district. The NRIS number for the McGraw Ranch is #98001163. However, this listing does not include all landscape features.

Existing NRIS Information:

Name in National Register:	McGraw Ranch
NRIS Number:	98001163
Other Names:	=Y(Double Bar Y)Ranch;5LR1131;Indian Head Ranch;=Y(Double Bar Y)Ranch;5LR1131;Indian Head Ranch
Primary Certification:	Listed In The National Register
Primary Certification Date:	09/17/1998

National Register Eligibility

National Register Concurrence:	Eligible -- SHPO Consensus Determination
Contributing/Individual:	Individual
National Register Classification:	District
Significance Level:	Local
Significance Criteria:	A - Associated with events significant to broad patterns of our history
Significance Criteria:	C - Embodies distinctive construction, work of master, or high artistic values

Period of Significance:

Time Period:	AD 1884 - 1948
Historic Context Theme:	Developing the American Economy
Subtheme:	The Cattle Frontier
Facet:	Ranches
Other Facet:	None
Time Period:	AD 1884 - 1948
Historic Context Theme:	Expressing Cultural Values
Subtheme:	Architecture
Facet:	Vernacular Architecture
Other Facet:	None

Area of Significance:

Area of Significance Category:	Entertainment - Recreation
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Area of Significance Subcategory:	None
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Area of Significance Category:	Agriculture
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Area of Significance Subcategory:	None
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Area of Significance Category:	Architecture
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Area of Significance Subcategory:	None
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Statement of Significance:

The McGraw Ranch is significant under Criterion A, in the area of agriculture, for its association with the history of cattle and dude ranching in the vicinity of Estes Park, Colorado. The ranch is representative of changes in land use in Estes Park during the past century, reflecting the evolution of cattle ranching as the industry progressed from large operations covering thousands of acres of deeded lands to more diversified businesses accommodating tourists seeking a western experience. The ranch is significant in the area of entertainment/recreation, as it is associated with a vital segment of the tourist industry of twentieth century Colorado. The ranch is representative of the numerous dude ranches which operated in the vicinity of Estes Park during the twentieth century and is the only intact dude ranch within Rocky Mountain National Park. The McGraw Ranch provided a western

experience filled with horseback riding, wholesome food, and outdoor enjoyment for hundreds of guests. The most famous guest to visit the McGraw Ranch was Alf Landon, who made the ranch his summer campaign headquarters during his unsuccessful bid for the presidency in 1936. The McGraw family were prominent leaders in the Colorado Dude and Guest Ranch Association and in civic affairs in Estes Park for several decades (National Historic Register Form 1998, Sec. 8, p. 11).

The McGraw Ranch is also significant under Criterion C, for its representation of the architecture and construction techniques employed for buildings of nineteenth century cattle ranches and twentieth century dude ranches in the West. The buildings of the ranch are representative in construction, design, materials, and variety of function of historic cattle ranches which evolved into dude ranches. The nominated district includes a complete dude ranch facility with an intact setting and buildings with historic integrity. The buildings are significant for the use of native materials in their construction, including locally harvested logs and stone. The layout and design of the ranch embodies many aspects typical of dude ranches in the West, including a row of small guest cabins, a large central lodge, support buildings, and an area for maintaining animals. The unchanged setting of the ranch is significant for its embodiment of many of the elements considered vital for a successful dude ranch, including beautiful scenery and a seemingly isolated, yet convenient location (National Historic Register Form 1998, Sec. 8, p. 11).

Chronology & Physical History

Cultural Landscape Type and Use

Cultural Landscape Type:

Vernacular

Current and Historic Use/Function:

Primary Historic Function:

Livestock

Primary Current Use:

Government-Other

Other Use/Function

Other Type of Use or Function

Livestock

Historic

Outdoor Recreation-Other

Historic

Current and Historic Names:

Name

Type of Name

Double Bar Y Ranch

Historic

Indian Head Ranch

Current

McGraw Guest Ranch

Historic

McGraw Ranch

Both Current And Historic

Ethnographic Study Conducted: No Survey Conducted
Chronology:

Year	Event	Annotation
AD 1884	Homesteaded	Henry Farrer files on a 160-acre homestead on February 9, 1884 which includes the McGraw Ranch site. Farrer builds a homestead cabin (#1002), an outhouse (#1011), an icehouse (#1015), and a small shed (#1019). Henry Farrer
	Purchased/Sold	Farrer sells the property to Peter J. Pauley Jr. Pauley begins the development of the site to become the headquarters of his Double Bar Y Ranch. In the summer and early fall of this year, a large barn (#1016) is constructed. Peter J. Pauley Jr.
AD 1884 - 1887	Built	A saw mill is established about one mile west of the house along Cow Creek. Also at this time, the pond and ditch system are developed. The PJ Pauley Cattle company runs a large operation, up to 2500 head of cattle. Peter J. Pauley Jr
	Built	During these years, the main ranch house (#1000), the bunkhouse (#1001), a small cabin (#1014) and the chicken coop (#1020) are built. The main house is constructed from lumber felled and sawed on the ranch property. Peter J. Pauley Jr
	Built	These years represent the most likely time that the entry road would have been graded and the wooden bridge constructed. In addition, the old dump site above the barn was likely established at this time. Peter J. Pauley Jr.
AD 1886	Ranched/Grazed	E.J. Johnson leases the ranch for his cattle. He carves his name and the date into a boulder above the spring house. E.J. Johnson
AD 1887 - 1905	Purchased/Sold	Henry C. Rouse and Hugo S. Miller begin purchasing land around the ranch site. By 1905, they have acquired two full sections, or 1280 acres of property.

		Henry C. Rouse
		Hugo S. Miller
AD 1897	Purchased/Sold	The Pauley family sells the original 160-acre homestead to Hugo S. Miller.
		Hugo S. Miller
AD 1904	Developed	"There were many buildings located at the ranch - the large ranch residence, an imposing barn, chicken house, two fine cabins, plus a myriad of other functional buildings needed in a cattle operation." (Pederson, p. 19)
		Hugo S. Miller
	Explored	John and Irene McGraw honeymoon in Colorado and visit Hugo and Mary Miller at the ranch.
		John & Irene McGraw
AD 1907	Land Transfer	Henry C. Rouse dies. Full ownership of the 1280 acres falls to Hugo S. Miller
		Hugo S. Miller
AD 1908	Purchased/Sold	The McGraws sign a 25-year lease for the ranch from the Millers. Later, Mary Miller's health deteriorates and the McGraws enter into a purchase agreement.
		John & Irene McGraw
AD 1909	Purchased/Sold	The McGraws purchase the ranch and change the ranch brand to Double Bar X. They call the ranch the McGraw Ranch.
		Irene & John McGraw
AD 1912	Developed	some additional small structures were built and fenced areas were delineated. The fields to the east of the main building cluster are irrigated. Also, Irene McGraw brings seeds or seedlings of the Balm of Gilead tree from the east to plant at the ranch.
		John & Irene McGraw
AD 1913	Expanded	Frank McGraw is born on the ranch.
		Frank McGraw

McGraw Ranch
Rocky Mountain National Park

AD 1915	Established	Rocky Mountain National Park is dedicated. The boundary of the park as drawn by Roosevelt actually bisects the McGraw Ranch so that the westernmost 480 acres becomes an inholding within the park. T. Roosevelt
AD 1918	Memorialized	John McGraw Sr. dies in Philadelphia. John McGraw
AD 1919	Moved	The McGraw family--Irene and her children John, James, Frank and Irene (nicknamed Dolly)--move from Philadelphia to take up permanent residence at the ranch. McGraw Family
AD 1920 - 1929	Built	An addition to the main house creates a dormer window and bunk room upstairs for the McGraw boys. McGraw Family
	Established	During this period, the property continues as a working cattle ranch, but the McGraws also start a firewood business, and sell dairy products. McGraw Family
	Ranched/Grazed	The McGraws cut hay from the meadows to the east and west of the ranch building cluster, using the existing ditch system for irrigation. McGraw Family
AD 1935	Built	The McGraws decide to develop guest facilities. They build four guest cabins (#1004, #1005, #1006, #1007) and a laundry building (#1010). The bunkhouse is converted to guest accommodations. McGraw Family
	Developed	The main house porch is enclosed and the kitchen is enlarged. A garage is added to the barn. The cabins and the main house receive indoor plumbing, and the ice house is converted to accommodate an electric generator. McGraw Family

	Ranched/Grazed	The family continues to run 50 to 75 Hereford cattle using open range, and cutting their own hay.
		McGraw Family
AD 1935 - 1939	Established	Electric power comes to the ranch, and the icehouse/generator building becomes a storeroom.
		McGraw Family
AD 1936	Settled	Republican presidential candidate Alf Landon and his family book the ranch and stay for the entire summer.
		Alf Landon
AD 1945	Built	Frank McGraw builds a house (#1009) for his wife and family-to-be west of the existing guest cabins. He plants a blue spruce at the southeast corner of the house.
		Frank McGraw
AD 1946	Planted	Frank McGraw and Ruth Hodson are married. Ruth's parents give them lilacs which they plant near their house.
		Frank McGraw
AD 1946 - 1948	Developed	Frank brings a Quonset Hut, similar to those he had seen during W.W.II, to the ranch to provide housing for the wranglers. It is sited southwest of the barn.
		Frank McGraw
	Planted	A small flower garden on the east side of the main house, which included Lily of the Valley, is created around this time.
		Frank McGraw
	Planted	Frank McGraw plants blue spruce trees along the entry road and near the cabins to provide shade, wind protection and privacy for guests. The thirteen spruce trees on the east side of the entry drive are planted.
		Frank McGraw
	Planted	Trees are planted on the west side of the entry drive. Frank also plants blue spruce between and in front of the cabins at this time.
		Frank McGraw

	Ranched/Grazed	Frank continues to run about 75 head of cattle and the family cuts up to 800 bales of hay from the meadow above and below the main buildings. About 20 to 30 horses are kept on the ranch.
		Frank McGraw
AD 1950 - 1979	Developed	During the 1950s, the stone planter behind the main lodge is built. A small building is constructed across from the barn that houses a small store. The television antenna that extends north of the barn may also have been installed during this time.
		McGraw Family
	Developed	During these years, guests enjoy weekly steak fries--an outdoor cookout that was held south of the ranch buildings near a large rock next to the entry road. A small smokehouse behind the barn is used for smoking fish.
		McGraw Family
	Developed	Horseback riding is the main activity with approximately 250 miles of pack trails surrounding the ranch. Guests also participate in fishing, hiking, badminton, Ping-Pong, horseshoes, card playing, and story telling. Square dances are held in the barn.
		McGraw Family
	Developed	The ranch accommodates from 30 to 40 guests from Memorial Day through Labor Day and on into hunting season in some years. Frank McGraw continues to run between 50 and 75 head of cattle, and the ranch also manages a herd of about 60 horses.
		McGraw Family
AD 1958	Reconstructed	The female workers duplex cabin (#1012) is relocated to the ranch from Hallowell Park in Rocky Mountain National Park.
		McGraw Family
AD 1959	Built	The guest cabin (#1003) immediately west of the old log cabin is constructed.
		McGraw Family

AD 1960 - 1966	Built	The Quonset hut is relocated to an area north of the barn and a male workers cabin (#1014) is constructed on the former hut site west of the barn. In addition, the swimming pool is built and many of the walkways are paved in concrete. McGraw Family
	Built	Two wells are drilled and the chlorinator house (#1023) is installed to treat ditch water in compliance with county standards. Complaints from neighbors end the horses' open pasturing around 1965. McGraw Family
AD 1966	Built	The guest cabin (#1008) north of the road, east of the laundry building is constructed. McGraw Family
	Purchased/Sold	The western portion of the ranch, 480 acres, which lies within the boundaries of Rocky Mountain National Park, is sold by the McGraw family to the National Park Service. McGraw Family
AD 1969 - 1970	Purchased/Sold	A parcel of land on the east side of the ranch is sold by the McGraw family to two CSU professors. McGraw Family
AD 1973	Purchased/Sold	As the McGraw family gets older and different members have different interests and different financial needs, there is interest in selling the ranch. McGraw Family
	Purchased/Sold	In 1973, the portions of the ranch that have not previously been sold and that are not set aside for the family's homes, are sold to New York Mountain Properties. The new owners change the name to Indian Head Ranch. McGraw Family
AD 1973 - 1979	Ranched/Grazed	Frank & Ruth McGraw continue to manage the guest ranch until 1979 with the exception of one season in 1975. Frank & Ruth McGraw

AD 1975	Purchased/Sold	A 40 acre parcel on the south edge of the ranch is sold to a Mr. Harris who later sells that section to the National Park Service. This first year that Economos owns the ranch, he hires his own manager to oversee the guest operations. New York Mountain Properties
	Purchased/Sold	New York Mountain Properties sells the ranch to various private owners. The 220 acre section that includes all the ranch buildings is sold to Jim Economos. New York Mountain Properties
AD 1976	Altered	Stormwater causes severe soil erosion south of the buildings in the areas where steak fries were held. The steak fry site is relocated to a place along Cow Creek, west of the main buildings after 1976. Flood
	Altered	The same storms that cause the Big Thompson Flood also create flooding conditions elsewhere in the region. Stormwater causes severe soil erosion around the corral and barn. Flood
AD 1979	Purchased/Sold	Jim Economos sells the property to Catherine Katona who continues the dude ranch operations. The McGraws do not continue their role as managers after this point. Katona Family
AD 1979 - 1988	Altered	Also, a large area is excavated northeast of the barn, either for construction fill or for an undetermined future building site. The pond and pond embankment are enlarged. Katona Family
	Altered	An addition is also constructed to the small cook's cabin. The barn is expanded to the east. A small storage structure and wood shed (#1019) northeast of the barn is taken down and stables are built. Katona Family

	Altered	Substantial changes are also made in the landscape. A large horse arena is graded in north of the ranch buildings with a timber retaining edge and an access road cutting up from the central ranch road.
		Katona Family
	Altered	The ditch is redirected to drop into the pond at a point further to the west. A stone barbecue is built south of the main house.
		Katona Family
	Altered	The Katona family makes several changes to the physical appearance of the ranch. An addition is constructed on the northeast corner of the main house which substantially alters the building form.
		Katona Family
	Altered	The Katonas change the outhouse into a phone booth.
		Katona Family
	Altered	The storage structure west of the guest cabins (# 1024), the trash shed (#1017) between the barn and the main house, the small shed (#1018) east of the entry drive near the barn, and the stable/shed (#1022) east of the barn (fallen down) are built.
		Katona Family
AD 1988	Altered	The NPS removes the wooden bridge and builds a culvert; clears a parking area and erects a rail fence and orientation signs; creates a trail connection around the east of the entry drive; fills in the swimming pool; and removes pasture fences.
		National Park Service
	Purchased/Sold	The National Park Service purchases 220 acres from the Katona Family.
		National Park Service
AD 1990	Preserved	The Colorado State Historic Preservation Office determines that the McGraw Ranch is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

Colorado State Historic Preservation Office

AD 1993	Preserved	The Keeper of the National Register determines that the McGraw Ranch is eligible for listing in the National Register for Historic Places.
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National Register

AD 1994	Preserved	The National Park Service publishes an Environmental Assessment that outlined several options for the ranch, from preserving some of the structures to demolishing all of them. There was a negative public reaction against the demolition option.
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National Park Service

AD 1998	Preserved	Several of the ranch structures are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
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National Register

Physical History:

Early Years - 1884-1904

The first resident of the land which would become the McGraw Ranch was Henry Farrer, one of the earliest guides for the big game hunting parties which frequented the vicinity of Estes Park in the 1870s. Farrer originally lived in Estes Park and is credited with building the town's first cabin in 1875 (Sprague, p.5). As more people settled in the area, Farrer filed on a 160-acre homestead outside of town on February 9, 1884. Farrer's claim was the first in that part of the Cow Creek Valley (Pederson, p. 7). During his time in the valley, the original homestead cabin (#1002) was built along with an outhouse (#1011), an icehouse (#1015), and a small shed (#1019) (RMNP Environmental Assessment, p. 17).

Shortly after filing his claim, Farrer sold the land to Peter J. Pauley Jr. Pauley, who had come to Colorado from St. Louis due to poor health, operated an extensive cattle business, with more than 2500 head of cattle, which extended from Glen Haven into what is now Rocky Mountain National Park. At the site he purchased from Farrer, Pauley established his ranch headquarters, to be known as the Double Bar Y Ranch (Pederson, p. 8-9). Frank McGraw later remembered, "Back up on the hill in back of the barn, we can see where they had a great huge corral where they used to round up the cattle that they would hold in the corral" (Frank McGraw Interview, 1974). The Pauley Company also leased land to other cattle ranchers. In 1886, Ed Johnson brought his herd to the ranch. Evidence of his time there is found on a boulder near the spring house where he carved his initials and the date, 1886. Pauley later recovered his health and moved back to St. Louis.

Between 1884 and 1887, while the PJ Pauley Cattle Company was managing the ranch, a number of structures were built, including the main house (#1000), the bunkhouse (#1001), a small cabin (#1014), and a chicken coop (#1020) (RMNP Environmental Assessment, p. 17). A large barn (#1016) was constructed in the summer and fall of 1884 according to ranch ledger books from that year (Ruth McGraw Interview, 1998). In addition to structures, improvements to the property were made that included the pond and ditch system, and corral and pasture fencing (Estes Park Gazette, Boyer, 1998). The main house was constructed from lumber harvested from the ranch, and cut and milled at a saw mill located just a mile west of the ranch buildings next to Cow Creek (Pederson, p. 18). During this busy building period is the most likely time that the entrance road would have been graded and the wooden bridge built. The old dump site above the barn also was likely to have been established at this time.

Between 1887 and 1905, Henry C. Rouse and Hugo S. Miller began purchasing land in the vicinity of the Double Bar Y Ranch. Property was purchased from the Knapps, the Hockadays, and the Public Trustee in tax sales (Grooters History, 1994). The original 160-acre ranch homestead was sold to Miller in 1897 (Pederson, p. 10). By 1905, the two men had acquired 1280 acres. Henry C. Rouse died in 1907 and full ownership of all 1280 acres fell to Hugo Miller (Boyer, 1998). Hugo and his wife Mary Miller lived at the ranch until Mrs. Miller's failing health forced the sale of the property (Pederson, p. 13).

The McGraws Come to Estes Park - 1904 -1936

John and Irene McGraw, from Philadelphia, were on their honeymoon in 1904 when they first visited Estes Park. The couple first stopped at the Brown Palace Hotel in Denver and planned to travel south to Colorado Springs. A desk clerk at the Brown Palace suggested an alternate trip to the small, scenic town of Estes Park, 76 miles northwest of Denver. The couple boarded a train to Longmont and then traveled by stage from Lyons to Estes Park. The McGraws rented a log house near town and spent the summer exploring the area (Pederson, p. 14-16).

During their stay, the McGraws met Hugo and Mary Miller and were invited to visit them at their ranch. Arriving at the ranch, the McGraws found not a simple log cabin typical of the area, but a dwelling which “bordered on quiet elegance, built in the tradition of comfort, security and beauty, not often found in the ruggedness of a remote mountain valley at this early time” (Pederson, p. 18). The house was constructed of lumber and stone obtained from the site. At the time the Millers owned the property, the ranch included the main residence (#1000), a large barn (#1016), a chicken house (#1020), two cabins for guests or hired hands (#1002, #1001), and other buildings related to their cattle operations. When the McGraws left for Philadelphia in the fall, they told the Millers to let them know if the ranch was ever for sale (Pederson, p. 18).

When the McGraws returned to Estes Park in following summers, they continued to visit the Millers and let them know of their interest in the ranch. In 1908, the Millers inquired whether they would be interested in leasing the property. A 25-year lease between the Millers and the McGraws was signed on August 17, 1908 with the lease period to begin on January 1, 1909. By the following year, the Millers were anxious to sell the property because the altitude of Estes Park was considered detrimental to Mrs. Miller’s health. On May 5, 1909 the McGraws purchased the ranch. At that time, they changed the brand to the Double Bar X because the Double Bar Y brand that had been associated with the ranch had been sold to another rancher (Pederson, p. 20-21).

Based on photos dating from around 1912, the ranch under McGraw ownership did not change significantly from what has been described earlier. Photos show the main house (#1000), the log cabin (#1002), the bunkhouse (#1001), the cook’s cabin (#1014), the outhouse (#1011) and the barn (#1016). Several small sheds were located behind the barn in a fenced area. Fences can also be seen in the photographs to the west and south of the pond, east of the entry road, north of the buildings and extending to the east from the barn and shed area. The meadow to the east of the barn was irrigated and there was a wooden diversion structure built on Cow Creek. Close to the house, Irene McGraw planted Balm of Gilead (*Populus candicans*) seedlings that she brought from Pennsylvania (Ruth McGraw Interview, 1998). (See photographs #1, #2, #3, #4, #5, #6, & #7)

In these early years, the McGraws used the ranch as a summer home, returning to Philadelphia in the winter. In the summer of 1913, their third son, Frank, was born on the ranch. In 1915, land that lies to the west of the ranch was dedicated by President Roosevelt as Rocky Mountain National Park. The line delineated by Roosevelt actually bisected the ranch and included the westernmost portion, approximately 480 acres. Therefore, this section of the ranch effectively became an inholding within Rocky Mountain National Park. Following the sudden death of John McGraw Sr. in 1918, Irene and her four children inherited the ranch.

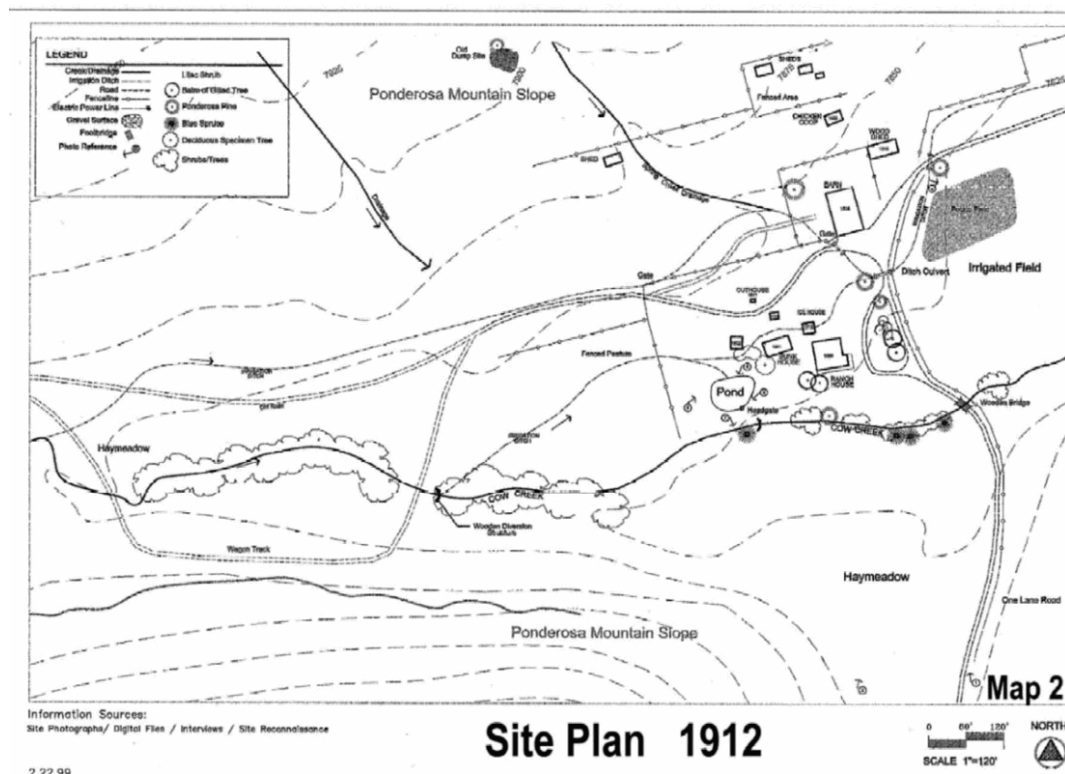
McGraw Ranch

Rocky Mountain National Park

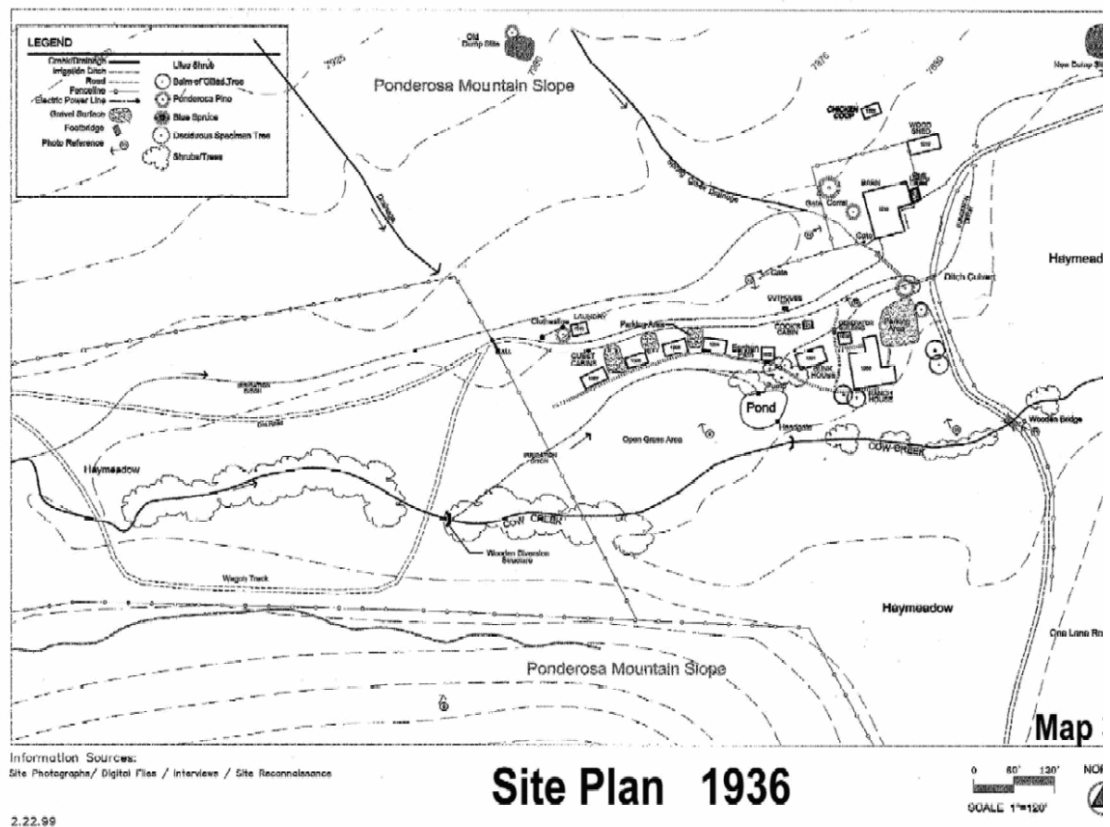
Originally Irene planned to sell the ranch, but when the family returned to the ranch in 1919 to prepare it for sale, they decided instead to move there permanently (Pederson, p.29). Irene hired a ranch foreman, Spot Stone, and decided to continue the ranching operations.

Ranch life for a widow with four children was challenging. Some winters, the family moved into town so that the children could attend school. In the 1920s, cattle prices began to fall and the family started a wood business to supplement their income. “We didn’t have too many cattle then, but we had milk cows. At that time, my mother was using the ranch mostly as a home, but it had to produce income so we had a wood business. I would have to drive a team to town every day with a load of wood. We had several men working out there and I’d come home at noon and they would reload the wagon and hook another team on and I’d bring another load of wood to town...” (Frank McGraw Interview, 1974).

During the 1920s, the McGraw Ranch functioned as a working ranch which produced cattle, wood and dairy products. The McGraws continued to hay the meadows to the west and east of the ranch cluster, using the existing ditch system for irrigation. Additional ranch improvements during this period included an addition to the main house that created a dormer window and “bunk room” upstairs for the McGraw boys (Ruth McGraw Interview, 1998).



1912 Site Plan. Source: Shapins Associates.



1936 Site Plan. Source: Shapins Associates.



Photo 1: View of Ranch and Entry Road, ca. 1912. Source: McGraw family.



Photo 2: View into Ranch from the south, showing entry drive, fences and original buildings, ca. 1912. Source: McGraw family.



Photo 3: Pond Headgate, pre-1936. Source: McGraw family.



Photo 4: Pond Headgate, pre-1936. Source: McGraw family.



Photo 5: View of pond, log cabin, bunkhouse and main house, ca. 1912. Source: McGraw family.



Photo 6: View of irrigated field east of barn; upper tilled area was used for potatoes and onions, ca. 1912. Source: McGraw family.



Photo 7: View of open field south of pond with diversion structure in foreground, ca. 1912. Source: McGraw family.

The McGraw Guest Ranch - 1935-1973

Until 1936, the property was strictly a working ranch and home for the McGraw family. As soon as the McGraws moved to the ranch, however, friends began visiting. Irene McGraw has been described as being very sociable, a woman who loved having visitors and treating them well. In 1935 John and Frank realized that they were spending a lot of time entertaining visitors, which involved providing accommodations, hosting many meals and showing people the surrounding area on horseback. They realized that they could provide all these services and gain a little income if they created a guest ranch (Pederson, p. 47). As agricultural prices continued to decline, it was an economically smart decision to convert the operation to a dude ranch. Other cattlemen in the region were also turning to the tourist trade to supplement their incomes. In the Estes Park area, Rocky Mountain National Park provided a draw for visitors from all over the country. The McGraw Ranch, in its location, had all the requirements for a successful dude ranch, including an attractive setting, facilities for horses, miles of trails, room for several cabins and a large main building, and access to other recreational activities such as hunting and fishing (National Register Form, p. 15).

To convert the working ranch to accommodate guests, several changes were made. Four guest cabins (#1007, #1006, #1005, #1004) and a laundry building (#1010) were constructed. (See photographs #8, & #9) The main house was remodeled to create dining rooms and a larger kitchen. The east porch was enclosed. (See photographs #10, #11) The bunkhouse was also converted to provide guest housing and a garage was added to the barn (RMNP Environmental Assessment, p. 18). As the McGraws were implementing these changes, word came that Kansas governor and Republican presidential candidate, Alf Landon, wished to rent the property as his summer headquarters. Mrs. Landon had previously visited the Estes Park area and believed the McGraw Ranch would provide a nice rest from the campaign trail. The Landon family stayed in the main house, and reporters and secret service stayed in the cabins (National Register Form, p. 15). Newspaper reports from that summer state that the main house and cabins were equipped with indoor plumbing and that the small ice house housed an electric generator that powered the ranch (Denver Post, 1936, p. 1).

The following summer, the McGraws began accepting guests from around the country. The McGraws maintained a pleasant family atmosphere for guests, many of whom came back year after year. Thirty to forty guests were generally accommodated at a time, and the ranch usually was filled to capacity. The ranch also continued to operate as a cattle ranch because Frank kept a herd of up to 75 Herefords on the ranch until the late 1960s (Ruth McGraw Interview, 1998). During the war, the cattle operations achieved greater importance because gasoline restrictions and labor shortages limited the guest ranch business. All four McGraw children enlisted in the service in WW II (National Register Form, p. 17). Presumably, Irene and her foreman Spot Stone ran the ranch in the children's absence.

After the war, tourism in Colorado increased and the guest ranch industry boomed. Frank McGraw and his sister, Irene, returned home, and in 1945, Frank became engaged to Ruth Hodson. He built his family house (#1009) on the ranch, west of the guest cabins. He also planted the blue spruce tree that grows near the southeast corner of the structure the same year. The following year, Frank and Ruth were married. Her parents gave them lilacs which they planted near their house and which are still growing there today (Ruth McGraw Interview, 1998).

In addition to building his own house, Frank McGraw made other improvements to the ranch in the post war years (up to 1948) and continued to make improvements to the ranch throughout the family's ownership. He planted trees along the entry road and near the cabins to provide shade, wind protection and privacy for guests. The thirteen blue spruce trees along the east side of the entry drive were planted before 1948 as well as the spruce trees on the west side of the entry drive. Additional trees were put in between and in front of the cabins. Frank had seen Quonset huts during W.W.II, and he brought one to the ranch to provide housing for the wranglers. It was placed near the barn on the southwest corner. There was also a small flower garden on the east side of the main house which included lily of the valley (Frank Grooters and Ruth McGraw Interviews, 1998). In the 1950s, the stone planter behind the main lodge was built. A small building was constructed across from the barn that housed a small store which stocked candy and snacks for the guests. The television antenna that extends north of the barn toward Pulpit Rock may have been installed during the 1950s (Ruth McGraw

Interview, 1998). Frank continued to run about 75 head of cattle, maintain a herd of 20-30 horses, and cut hay from about 80 acres of meadow above and below the ranch buildings (NPS Appraisal Report 1966, p. 11).

During the next two decades and through the 1970s, business at the ranch grew and the guest ranch flourished. The ranch accommodated from 30 to 40 guests from Memorial Day through Labor Day and on into hunting season during some years. The McGraws believed that for the guests, “every day was Sunday. Everybody was on vacation and having a good time” (Pederson, p. 83). No scheduled activities were provided. Guests were free to plan and request any itinerary they wished to pursue. Horseback riding was the main activity of each day with rides planned to meet the needs of individuals or groups. More than sixty horses were kept at the ranch and more than 250 miles of pack trails were accessible from the ranch. Rides were of varying length and difficulty (National Register Form, p. 16). Guests also participated in fishing, hiking, badminton, Ping-Pong, horseshoes, card playing, and story telling. Square dances were sometimes held in the barn (Pederson, p. 83). (See photographs #12, #13, #14, #15, & historic brochure)

During these years, guests enjoyed weekly steak fries--an outdoor cookout that was held south of the ranch buildings close to a large rock near the entry road. A small smokehouse behind the barn was used for smoking fish that were harvested from nearby streams, although it is unclear when this structure was built or removed (Fran Grooters Interview, 1998). In 1958, a cabin was relocated from Hallowell Park in Rocky Mountain National Park to the ranch to be used for female workers accommodations (#1012), and the guest cabin (#1003) immediately west of the old log cabin was built (National Register Form, p. 10).

During the 1960s, small improvements continued to be made on the ranch. An additional guest cabin (#1008) was built north of the central road to accommodate ongoing demand. The Quonset hut was relocated to an area north of the barn and a more substantial male workers cabin was constructed on the former hut site west of the barn. A swimming pool was built and many of the walkways were paved in concrete (Fran Grooters Interview, 1998). To comply with county water standards, two wells were drilled and a chlorinator house was installed to treat the ditch water (Pederson, p. 72).

Around 1965, complaints from neighbors ended the horses' open pasturing. Previously, even during winter, the horses were turned out to graze the surrounding meadows, though they were fenced out of the hay fields. Often, the horses strayed north of Estes Park to Glen Haven and beyond. As subdivisions were built, people began to complain of finding McGraw horses in their yards, so the family had to start trailing the horses to pastures near Loveland and Longmont for the winter (Pederson, p. 115).

In 1966, 480 acres, the western section of the ranch that was within the park's boundaries, was sold to be included into Rocky Mountain National Park. Without that section of the property available, the ranch was unable to support a cattle operation. From 1966 forward, the McGraw Ranch was strictly a guest ranch (Pederson, p. 49). In 1969 a portion of the ranch on its eastern end was sold by the McGraw family to two professors from CSU (Fran Grooters Interview,

1998).



Photo 8: Oblique view of Ranch from the southwest, ca. 1936. The pond in this view is very small, on the west center right of the photo. It may have been partially drained to build the cabins. Source: McGraw family.



Photo 9: View of newly constructed guest cabins, ca. 1936. Source: McGraw family.



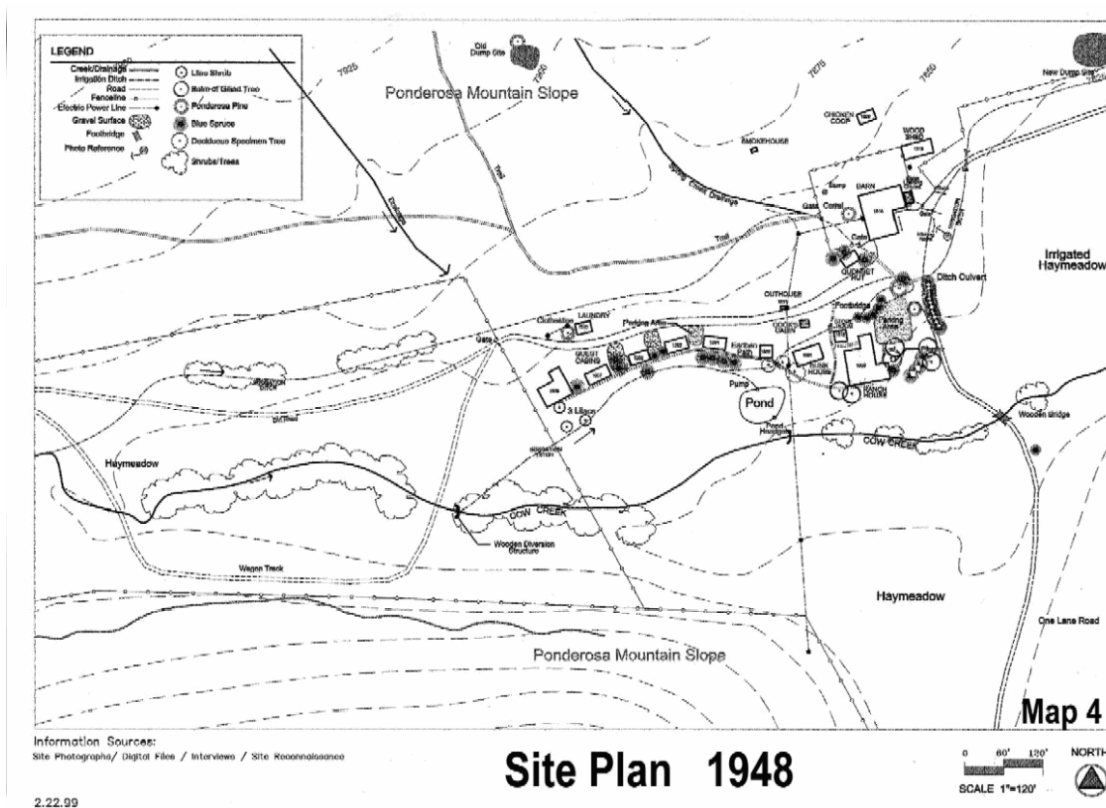
Photo 10: View of main Ranch House / Lodge with enclosed porch and two large Balm of Gilead trees, ca. 1936. Source: McGraw family.



Photo 11: View of entry drive, wooden bridge, and Balm of Gilead trees (summer of presidential candidate Alf Landon's residency), ca. 1936. Source: McGraw family.



Photo 12: Guests saddle-up and head out on a trail ride, ca. 1936. Source: McGraw family.



1948 Site Plan. Source: Shapins Associates.



Photo 13: View of barn from the southeast, ca. 1950. Source: McGraw family.



Photo 14(a): View of barn, fences, and outhouse, date unknown/ca. 1930s. Source: McGraw family.



Photo 14(b): View of barn, fences, and outhouse, date unknown/ca. 1930s. Source: McGraw family.



Photo 15: Guests showing off their catch, date unknown/ca. 1930s. Source: McGraw family.



PACK TRIPS A SPECIALTY

For those of you who prefer horses to autos, there are exciting pack trips—a McGraw Ranch specialty—varying in length from two days to two weeks.

Located in picturesque Cow Creek Valley, nestled between Rocky Mountain National Park and Roosevelt National Forest, six miles and just fifteen minutes from the village of Estes Park, and seventy-six miles from metropolitan Denver, McGraw Ranch enjoys a happy combination of peaceful seclusion and easy accessibility.



AROUND THE EVENING CAMPFIRE

HOW TO GET HERE

Good roads lead to the Ranch from all points of the compass, or fast trains and national airlines bring guests to Denver where, for a nominal fee, they may be met at rail or air terminal by a McGraw Ranch car, or they may board a Rocky Mountain Transportation Company bus for a pleasant sightseeing trip to Estes Park. Village buses are met by arrangement.

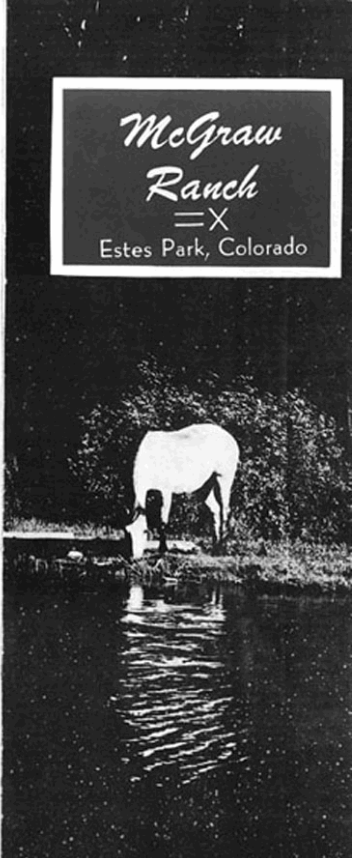


INFORMATION

Sport and informal clothing, jeans and western clothing are most popular; warm sweaters or jackets for cool night wear or for riding in the high country. Western clothing may be purchased in Estes Park at reasonable prices. Ideal for children and we cater to them. There are no poisonous snakes or weeds. Estes Park region has never had a polio case. Relief from hay fever and asthma. Churches of all denominations nearby. Television in main lodge. Recommended by Duncan Hines. Member of Colorado Dude and Guest Ranch Association.

RATES AND RESERVATIONS

American plan. A small deposit is required with all reservations. Special family and all-inclusive rates are available. Also special rates during June and September. Horses are at standard rates but guide service is furnished without charge. There are accommodations for thirty-two guests. Guest season June through September.



McGraw
Ranch
=X
Estes Park, Colorado

Page 1 (front) - Guest Ranch advertising brochure, 1950s or 1960s.



GUEST COTTAGES

McGraw Ranch is not just another "dude" ranch where the only crop raised is dudes, but is an honest-to-goodness mountain ranch in the high Rockies. Congenial hosts, carefree ranch life and good fellowship are yours at the ranch. As a guest, you are not asked to follow any kind of activity schedule, but are encouraged simply to relax and do whatever pleases you most. Horseback riding, of course, is the major activity of guests, but others enjoy trout fishing in the cold streams winding through ranch property, or simply hiking along pine-shadowed mountain trails. Ranch steak fries and breakfast rides are held weekly.

For you who wish to enjoy the other limitless grandeur of the West, your cabin becomes your headquarters for daily excursions through the mighty Rockies, for readily accessible are many points of interest in Northern Colorado—the awe-inspiring expanses of famous Rocky Mountain National Park, Long's Peak, Grand Lake, Devil's Gulch, breathtaking Gem Lake, and dozens of other scenes to make up your portfolio of Colorado memories. As a change from carefree days of relaxation at McGraw Ranch, nearby Estes Park village offers a modern shopping center, authentic Western Souvenirs, movies, dancing, swimming and golf.



ONE OF OUR HOME-LIKE ACCOMMODATIONS



ON THE TRAIL

Continuous Operation
Since 1908

For reservations, write or wire:

McGraw Ranch

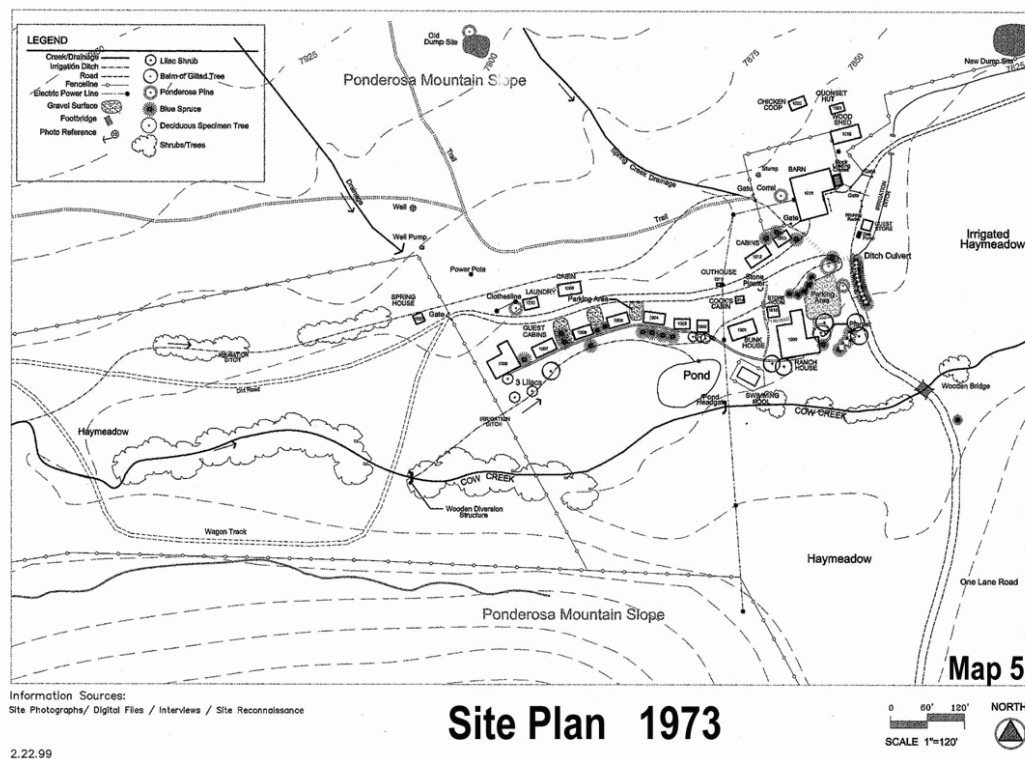
ESTES PARK, COLORADO

"Rough it with ease" is the slogan at this mountain mecca where the large modern Main Lodge and all the cozy, home-like guest cabins for two to seven people are equipped with electric lights, showers, bathtubs, a constant reliable supply of hot and cold running water, and dependable gas heat. Innerspring mattresses on all beds make for long nights of refreshing sleep. Brisk mountain air and exercise invigorate appetites and meals are planned accordingly, featuring the finest of government inspected meats, a wide variety of fresh vegetables and fruit, and plenty of wholesome pasteurized milk. You don't dress for dinner—for informality is the keynote of the relaxing atmosphere at McGraw Ranch.



NESTLED IN THE COLORADO ROCKIES

Page 2 (back) - Guest Ranch advertising brochure, 1950s or 1960s.



1973 Site Plan. Source: Shapins Associates.

The Ranch Changes Hands - 1973-1998

In 1973, the McGraw children, each with their own growing families to support, made the decision to sell the ranch. The family kept some land for their own homes, but the remaining portion of the ranch was sold to New York Mountain Properties. The new owners changed the name to Indian Head Ranch (National Register Form, Sec. 8, p. 18). New York Mountain Properties was interested in maintaining the ranch as a guest resort for the long term and the company kept the ranch much as it was. Frank & Ruth McGraw continued to manage the guest ranch for the new owners. However, in 1975 there was a disastrous fire at a development property the company owned in Idaho. Because of the fire the company immediately sold its Colorado holdings. The McGraw Ranch was divided among several private owners. The 220 acres which encompassed all the ranch buildings and the pond and ditches was sold to Jim Economos (Pederson, p. 75). A 40 acre parcel along the entry road was also sold at this time to a Mr. Harris, who later sold it to the National Park Service (Fran Grooters Interview, 1998).

In 1976 the storm that caused the Big Thompson Flood also caused flooding in other parts of the region. Stormwater caused severe soil erosion around the corral and barn. In the corral, a stump still shows evidence of this erosion, and the foundation of the barn was partially exposed. The area where the steak fries were held, south of the ranch headquarters, west of the road and close to a big rock, was also severely eroded. After 1976, steak fries occurred near Cow

Creek west of the main buildings (Fran Grooters Interview, 1998).

In 1979, Jim Economos sold the property to Catherine Katona who continued the dude ranch operations, but without the help of the McGraws, who chose to retire at that time. She continued to call the ranch, Indian Head Ranch. The Katona family made several changes to the physical appearance of the ranch. An addition was put on the northeast corner of the main house which substantially altered the building form. The small cook's cabin was also substantially changed when it was enlarged to become another guest cabin. An outdoor stone barbecue was constructed south of the main house. The barn was also expanded to the east. The small storage structure and wood shed northeast of the barn were taken down and stables were built in that location (Fran Grooters Interview, 1998). Several sheds were also built--the storage structure west of the guest cabins (#1024), the trash shed between the barn and the main house (#1017), the small shed east of the entry drive near the barn (#1018), and the stable/shed east of the barn (#1022) (no longer standing). The Katonas also changed the outhouse into a phone booth (National Register Form, Sec. 7, p. 8).

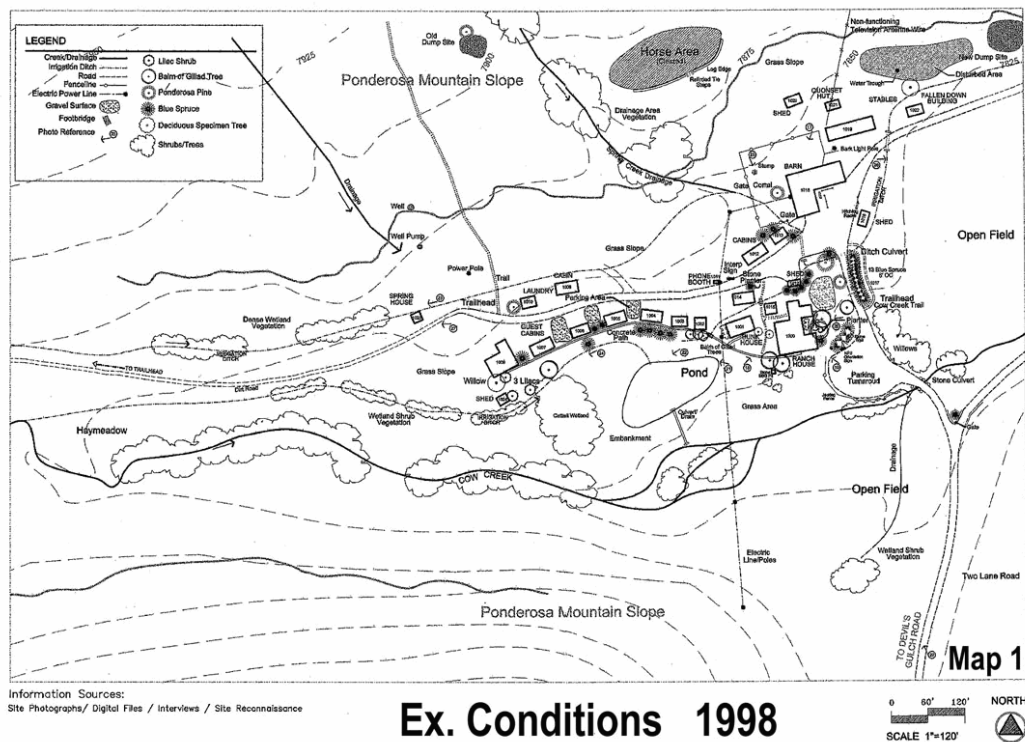
Substantial changes were also made to the landscape. A large horse arena was graded in north of the ranch buildings with a timber retaining edge and an access road cutting up from the central ranch road. Also, a large area was excavated northeast of the barn, either for construction fill or for an undetermined future building site. The pond and pond embankment were enlarged and the ditch was redirected to drop into the pond at a point further to the west (Ruth McGraw Interview, 1998). The Katona family altered not only the physical form of the ranch, but also changed the way it was operated. It became more of a retreat for weekend and transient clients than a summer-long home for guests who had become part of an extended McGraw family (RMNP Environmental Assessment, p. 18).

On Oct. 28, 1988, The National Park Service purchased the 220-acre Indian Head Ranch to become part of Rocky Mountain National Park. The purpose of the purchase was to add elk and bighorn sheep habitat to the Park holdings, and to provide public access to park and forest service trails (RMNP Environmental Assessment, p. 1). The Park Service removed the wooden bridge and built a culvert at the Cow Creek crossing. Also, a parking area was cleared, delineated with a rail fence and marked with information signs. A trail connection was built from the parking area around to the east and then back to the central road.. The park also filled in the swimming pool for safety reasons and removed miles of pasture fencing to reduce risk of wildlife injury. (Fran Grooters & Ruth McGraw Interviews, 1998).

Public pressure over RMNP plans to demolish the ranch buildings led to a preservation effort for the ranch. In 1993, a request for determination of eligibility was prepared by park staff and submitted to the Colorado State Historic Preservation Office. The property was found to be eligible for the National Register as a Historic District on June 10, 1993 (RMNP Environmental Assessment, p. 1). On September 17, 1998, the property was officially entered in the National Register as an historic district. The National Register listing specifies that eleven buildings and three structures were determined to be contributing features. The eleven buildings that are contributing are: the main house (#1000), the barn (#1016), the bunkhouse (#1001), the log cabin (#1002), three duplex guest cabins (#1004, #1006, #1007), the single guest cabin

McGraw Ranch
Rocky Mountain National Park

(#1005), Frank & Ruth McGraw residence (#1009), the laundry (#1010), the outhouse (#1011). The three contributing structures are: the Ice House/Storage Shed (#1015), the pond (#1016a), and the irrigation ditch (#1016b).



1998 Site Plan showing existing conditions. Source: Shapins Associates.



Photo 16: View of McGraw Ranch from Entry Road looking north, 1998. Source: Shapins Associates.



Photo 17: North side of Barn and Corral Fence, 1998. Source: Shapins Associates.



Photo 18: Bunk House and Main House, view from the south, 1998. Source: Shapins Associates.



Photo 19: East side of Main House with Historic Balm of Gilead Trees, 1998. Source: Shapins Associates.



Photo 20: View of Main House from NPS Parking Area with Historic Balm of Gilead Trees, 1998. Source: Shapins Associates.



Photo 21: Guest Cabins above pond, 1998. Source: Shapins Associates.



Photo 22 : Pond, view looking west, 1998. Source: Shapins Associates.



Photo 23: Upper irrigation ditch, view from well pump looking east, 1998. Source: Shapins Associates.



Photo 24: Lower irrigation ditch below guest cabins, view west, 1998. Source: Shapins Associates.



Photo 26: Cow Creek Valley, view from Barn to the east, 1998. Source: Shapins Associates.



Photo 27: Cow Creek Valley, view from Ranch Buildings to the west, 1998. Source: Shapins Associates.

Analysis & Evaluation of Integrity

Analysis and Evaluation of Integrity Narrative Summary:

The landuse patterns and response to the natural environment of the McGraw Ranch clearly show its history as both a working cattle ranch and a guest ranch. The buildings themselves in their design and materials and their relationship to each other and the site are representative of the cultural traditions of western ranching. The setting of the ranch complex in an open, relatively flat section of a mountain stream valley is typical of western ranches. Cow Creek provided an adequate supply of clean water for people and livestock. The buildings were sited where two open valleys come together, a site that allowed open views and southern exposure. This functional responsiveness to the natural environment is typical of rural development. The open meadows of the valley floor and the presence of the year around creek were attractive for ranching because the meadows provided space for pastures and hay fields, and the creek allowed the development of irrigation and a storage pond.

The spatial organization of the ranch also shows a functional efficiency typical of western ranches. Buildings are clustered together in use groupings - guest cabins; main lodge and support buildings; and the barn and stock areas. The buildings also show the use of native materials including locally harvested wood and stone. The circulation system is straightforward with an entry road which serves the house and barn and provides access to the ranch buildings. The character of the ranch did not change significantly when it became a guest ranch, and in fact, part of its appeal came from the fact that it maintained the feel of a working cattle ranch. The layout and design embodies many aspects of other western dude ranches such as the row of small cabins, the main lodge and the large area devoted to the care of the trail horses. The scenic setting and secluded feel of the ranch were also important features of the guest ranch.

Although the character and historic quality of the ranch have been degraded somewhat from insensitive building activity in the 1980s and neglect in the 1990s, the site still has great integrity overall. The landuse patterns and spatial organization are still evident and many elements still remain that provide more specific character and feel.

A summary of character defining elements follows:

- Gently sloping scenic stream valley
- Open meadows with forested side slopes
- Pulpit Rock & Indian Head Rock
- Ponderosa trees in open grasses
- Clustered building complex set in open space along the creek
- Historic buildings
- Historic structures - corral, hitching racks, bench, pedestrian bridges, power poles
- Circulation system - roads, parking areas, walkways
- Pastures and hay fields
- Pond and irrigation ditches
- Planted vegetation: spruce, Balm of Gilead, lilac

- Overall non-manicured landscape that preserves native vegetation
- Views:
 - view of the ranch from the entry road nestled in its secluded valley
 - views up and down the valley from the ranch buildings
 - view from the cabins and the main lodge across the stream to Indian Head Rock
 - views from the ranch buildings of Pulpit Rock

INTEGRITY EVALUATION

“Integrity refers to the authenticity of the historic identity of a cultural resource, which is evidenced by the survival of physical characteristics from a historic period. This concept, applied in the preservation of historic buildings and structures, should also be applied in the preservation of biotic cultural resources.” (Firth, 1985) The integrity of the cultural landscapes at McGraw Ranch is assessed based on a comparison of the existing conditions with those of the historic period of significance.

OVERALL INTEGRITY RATING = INTEGRITY IS RETAINED

1. LOCATION:

The place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred.

All features associated with the period of significance remain in their historic location. The integrity of the location is retained.

2. DESIGN:

Design is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property.

The McGraw Ranch exists as a representation of the architecture and construction techniques employed for buildings of nineteenth century cattle ranches and twentieth century dude ranches in the west. The design, construction, and materials used reflect the transition of the historic cattle ranches to a dude ranch.

Even though pasture fencing and some historic trails are no longer present, this does not substantially reduce integrity. In addition, the overall site layout of the McGraw Ranch reflects the organization and needs of a working ranch while later additions clearly serve guest related functions.

3. SETTING:

The physical environment of the historic landscape; the character of the place in which the property played its historical role.

The layout of the property, along with the historic buildings, and the unchanged setting of the ranch is a significant representation of both a western cattle ranch and a dude ranch. The beautiful scenery and isolated yet convenient location enhanced the western ranch experience for visitors and continues to

provide a similar feeling today.

4. MATERIALS:

Materials are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property.

The use of native materials, specifically locally harvested logs and stone, in the construction of the buildings and landscape elements is significant and adds to the integrity of the site.

5. WORKMANSHIP:

Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during the historic period. Evidence of historic workmanship is retained.

6. FEELING:

Feeling refers to a landscape's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time. Feeling results from the on-site presence of physical features, and from continuing values and meanings of the place alive in contemporary communities; these, taken together, convey the landscape's historic character.

Extant contributing landscape elements convey the historic feeling of the ranch. The beautiful scenery and isolated yet convenient location enhanced the western ranch experience for visitors and continues to provide a similar feeling today.

7. ASSOCIATION:

The direct link between an important historic event, or person, and a historic landscape.

Extant contributing landscape elements serve to convey the relationship between the physical landscape and its historic significance.

The McGraw Ranch exists as a representation of the architecture and construction techniques employed for buildings of nineteenth century cattle ranches and twentieth century dude ranches in the west. The ranch represents the role of agriculture and tourism in the Estes Park region of Colorado and throughout the west in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Landscape Characteristic:

Archeological Sites

A surface survey of the building area was completed on May 31, 1990. The results indicated that "no historic or prehistoric artifacts were discovered" (Borel, p. 4).

Buildings and Structures

There are numerous buildings and structures at the McGraw Ranch site. The buildings have been carefully reviewed as part of the National Register Nomination research that was completed in 1998 by Laurie and Thomas Simmons. Some of the structures were also reviewed by the Simmons. As part of the CLI research, the buildings were looked at less individually and

more in terms of their overall layout and design. The combination of the buildings' historic integrity and their organization on the site makes them important not just as historic structures, but also as features in the landscape. The organization of the structures in relation to the setting and to each other is what creates the sense of the historic guest ranch. Certain landscape elements also contribute to the integrity of the property. The buildings and structures can be described in functional groupings: the barn and livestock area; the main house/lodge and support buildings; the guest cabins; and the pond and irrigation ditches.

Barn & Livestock Area

This area includes the barn (#1016), stables (#1019), Quonset Hut (#1021), old chicken coop (#1020), storage shed (#1018), ruined building (#1022), corral, hitching racks, bench, horse arena, and dump sites.

Barn (#1016): The barn was originally built in 1884 and received 2 additions during the period of significance. A third small addition on the east side dates to the 1980s. The barn was used for feeding the horses three times a day. It is a large L-shaped building with a stone foundation and mostly board and batten siding.

Storage Shed (#1018): This shed was built in the 1980s in approximately the same location as the little store that existed during earlier guest ranch years. It is a wooden building with a low shed roof.

Stables (#1019): The stables were built in the 1980s on the site of the old wood shed and storage building.

Chicken Coop/Shed (#1020): The chicken coop was one of the original buildings on the ranch, built sometime between 1884 and 1887. It was used as a chicken coop well into the 1950s, but was heavily modified in the 1980s.

Quonset Hut (#1021): The Quonset hut was brought to the ranch right after World War II, and was originally located southwest of the barn. It was used to house male ranch staff. It was moved in the 1960s when a more substantial cabin was built for male workers.

Ruined Building (#1022): This large building was built in the 1980s, perhaps as additional stables, but it did not last very long and is currently a ruin.

Corral: The corral extends from the west and rear of the barn, is built from tree limbs and logs, peeled and unpeeled, and is in its historic location. The exact date of the existing corral fence sections is unknown. Except for one section, the corral fence is still standing. Originally, there were two stock chutes on the east side of the barn that were connected to the corral. One chute was used to load cattle, the other was used for horses. They were removed in the 1980s.

Hitching Racks: Hitching racks in front of the barn were used for grooming, saddling and shoeing the horses. These racks date back to the historic period. Both the racks and the corral are significant features pointing to the importance of trail horses on the ranch.

Bench: A bench on the east side of the main barn, constructed of tree stumps and logs was known as the "Liar's Bench." Fran Grooters and Ruth McGraw related that there was always a bench in that location that was used for sitting and telling stories before and after trail rides.

Stump: A large stump in the corral is evidence of a Ponderosa Pine that grew there which appears in the earliest photos. The tree came down sometime in the late 1940s and the stump remained in the corral. The stump was a favorite play place for the McGraw girls and for children visiting the ranch (Fran Grooters Interview, 1998).

Horse Arena: The small horse arena was graded into the hillside above the barn in the 1980s. It was used for riding events such as jumping and barrel racing. It is a flat area approximately 60' by 120' with the edge held in place by timbers placed on the ground as a retaining structure. It is not fenced now, but it might have had a fence around it when it was being used.

Original Dump: A dump site is located up on the hill above the ranch buildings. It is a small area where old cans and scrap metal can still be seen. During the 1940s and 50s, the McGraw girls used to find old bottles there dating back to the turn of the century. It is likely that the dump was used in the early years of the ranch.

1936 Dump: Because the original dump was visible from some of the trails, the dump was relocated after the ranch became a guest facility. The new site was further east above the barn and behind a small rise of land where it was not visible. This dump site was used throughout the guest ranch years. During the 1980s a large area above the barn was graded out, either for a new building site or for dirt fill. The excavated area changed the configuration of the ground in that area and makes the 1936 dump site difficult to discern.

Character defining features

- Barn
- Corral
- Hitching Racks
- Bench
- Stump
- Original Dump

The Main House/Lodge & Support Buildings

This area includes the main house/lodge (#1000), the bunkhouse (#1001), the log cabin (#1002), the outhouse (#1011), the icehouse (#1015), the cook's cabin (#1014), the female workers' cabin (#1012), the male workers' cabin (#1013), trash storage shed (#1017), two pedestrian

bridges, stone planter, stone barbecue, power poles, fenced parking area, and a culvert at the entry where the road crosses Cow Creek.

Main House (#1000): The main ranch house/lodge was the home of early owners of the ranch and of the McGraws until they converted the property to a dude ranch in 1936. The original portion of the house was built utilizing logs harvested on the ranch. During the dude ranch era, the large ranch house was expanded and became the focus of activity and the gathering place for guests. Several additions were made to the north side of the building in the 1980s.

Bunkhouse (#1001): Located immediately west of the main house/ lodge, this structure was one of the buildings associated with the original cattle ranch operations, when it was used as a bunkhouse for hired hands. When the ranch began taking in guests, the building became the winter home of the McGraws, as the main ranch house/lodge was closed after the summer season. After Frank McGraw married, the building was the home of his mother, Irene, until she retired.

Log Cabin (#1002): This is believed to be the oldest of the ranch buildings, dating to Henry Farrer's occupation of the land. It was among the buildings in existence in 1884.

Outhouse (#1011): The rustic style outhouse reportedly dates to the early period of the ranch in the 1880s. It was converted to a phone booth for guests in the 1980s.

Ice House (#1015): This low, one-story, log structure was built in about 1884 as an icehouse for ice harvested from the pond. The structure reportedly had a small ditch running through it and milk and butter were stored there. The structure was later converted to a generator house, producing coal-fired electricity for the ranch operations. After power came to the ranch in the late 1930s, it was used as a storage shed.

Cook's Cabin (#1014): This building originally served as quarters for the ranch cook. The original structure dates back to the early years of the property when it was first established as a cattle ranch. In the 1980s, the building was expanded to create a duplex guest unit. The expansions almost completely obscure the original cabin.

Female Workers' Cabin (#1012): This duplex cabin was assembled as lodging for female workers at the ranch in 1958. The one story building is composed of two cabins moved to the ranch from the Jack Woods Camp and joined with a bathroom section in the middle.

Male Workers' Cabin (#1013) This building was built in the 1960s to replace the Quonset Hut and provide housing for male ranch workers.

Trash Storage Shed (#1017) In the 1980s, this shed was built to store trash. It is a small, low roofed building facing the entry road.

Wood Pedestrian Bridge: A small wooden pedestrian bridge crosses the irrigation ditch behind the main house. Before the trash shed was built, the ranch owners often parked behind the house and used that bridge to access the kitchen entrance. The bridge is still serviceable, but is not in good condition.

Stone Pedestrian Bridge: A stone pedestrian bridge crosses the irrigation ditch just in front of the log cabin. The bridge is on the main path connecting all the cabins to the main house. Currently the bridge has wooden railings that were added in the 1980s. Originally there were no railings.

Large Stone Planter: A large round stone planter was built in the 1950s along the entry road near the cook's cabin. It was used as a flower garden. It is in good condition today.

Small Planter: A small planter was built east of the main house in the 1940s and was used for flowers. Remnants of this garden planter are still evident.

Stone Barbecue: A stone barbecue was built in the 1980s south of the main house just off the porch.

Power Poles & Power Line: A power line comes into the ranch from the south. Because power was brought to the ranch in the late 1930s, the power poles are considered historic. Power poles are located near the bunkhouse, next to the outhouse, near the corral fence and behind the barn. A newer power pole stands further to the west near the spring house. It was erected in the 1960s to bring power to a well pump.

Fenced Parking Area: A fenced parking area with an orientation sign was constructed in the 1990s by the National Park Service. Currently, parking is not allowed there and visitors are told to park along McGraw Ranch Road.

Stone Culvert: In the 1990s, after the National Park Service bought the property, they removed the old wooden bridge where the entry road crosses Cow Creek, and built a stone culvert. The culvert occasionally gets blocked up by beavers and so requires yearly maintenance to keep it open.

Character defining features

- Main House/Lodge
- Bunkhouse
- Log Cabin
- Outhouse
- Ice house
- Wooden Pedestrian Bridge
- Stone Pedestrian Bridge
- Small Planter

- Power Poles

Guest Cabins

The area includes six guest cabins (#1003, #1004, #1005, #1006, #1007, #1008), the McGraw residence (#1009), the laundry (#1010), and a storage shed (#1024).

Single Guest cabin (#1003): This small, single unit guest cabin was built in 1959 in the same style and using similar materials as the 1930s era guest cabins.

Duplex Guest Cabins (#1004, #1006, #1007): These cabins were built in 1935-36 when the McGraw family decided to convert their property into a guest ranch. Irene, Frank, John, & James McGraw worked on the construction of the cabins. The three cabins have matching designs and materials.

Single Guest Cabin (#1005): This cabin was also built in 1935-36 to create guest accommodations. Irene, Frank, John, and James built the cabin using similar materials and a similar plan as for the duplex units.

Guest Cabin (#1008): This cabin was built in 1966 in a style similar to the other earlier guest cabins. It was the only guest cabin located on the north side of the ranch road.

McGraw Residence (#1009): This dwelling housed Frank and Ruth McGraw and their five girls. The house was built by Frank McGraw in 1945 prior to his 1946 marriage. He planted the large blue spruce tree which grows next to the house.

Laundry (#1010): This building was constructed in 1936 as a laundry for the guest operation.

Storage Shed (#1024): This small shed was built in the 1980s. Its location at the west end of the pond across from the McGraw residence detracts from the views up the valley to the west.

Character defining features:

- Duplex Guest Cabins
- Single Guest Cabin (#1005)
- McGraw Residence
- Laundry

Pond and Ditches

This area includes the pond, the upper ditch, the lower ditch, ditch culverts, the spring house, two wells and a power pole. From the very early years, ranch inhabitants diverted water from Cow Creek into a pond and irrigation ditches. However, there is no record of any water rights on file for the ranch until 1973 when two wells received water rights for domestic purposes

from the Water Court for Water Division 1, for the State of Colorado.

Pond (#1016a): This unlined natural pond existed when the ranch was originally established. Covering less than half an acre, the pond has been periodically dug out over the years. Ice was cut from the pond and stored in the ranch ice house. Children skated on the pond in the winter and during the summer it was stocked with trout for fishing. Originally the pond level was controlled with a headgate on the southwest end of the pond. In the 1980s, the pond was enlarged, a large embankment was built and a culvert was put in on the south edge of the pond to maintain the water level.

Ditches (#1016b): Irrigation ditches were built when the ranch was first established in 1884. Two ditches came out of Cow Creek west of the ranch buildings, and ran through the property until they came together in one culvert in front of the barn which ran under the entry road then traversed the top of the east pasture to a point where it emptied out into that pasture. The upper ditch extended from Cow Creek and ran above the buildings, into the corral, and then into the culvert. A lower ditch ran below the guest cabins and emptied into the pond. This ditch originally continued past the pond behind the main lodge where it joined the upper ditch. Both ditches were unlined earthen ditches which did not have headgate structures on Cow Creek. The lower ditch was reworked a little bit during the 1980s. Originally it came out of Cow Creek closer to the ranch buildings, and had a small wooden diversion structure on the creek (Fran Grooters Interview, 1998). It may have been changed after the floods in 1976 when the Cow Creek channel shifted to the south, or more likely, it may have been changed when the pond was enlarged significantly in the 1980s. Today the ditches can still be seen in the landscape, although they are beginning to fill in and fade in certain sections.

Spring House (#1023): The spring house was installed in the 1960s when county regulations required that drinking water be chlorinated. Water was diverted from the ditch into the spring house where it was run through a chlorinator and then returned to the ditch.

Wells: In the late 1960s, wells were dug to provide drinking water for the ranch.

Power Pole: When the wells were dug, a power pole was erected and a power line was extended to it to provide power for the well pump.

Character defining features

-Pond

-Ditches & Culverts

Character-defining Features:

Feature:	Barn - 1884
Feature Identification Number:	95342
Type of Feature Contribution:	Contributing
IDLCS Number:	52791

LCS Structure Name:	BARN
LCS Structure Number:	HS-1016
Feature:	Bunkhouse - 1884
Feature Identification Number:	95343
Type of Feature Contribution:	Contributing
IDLCS Number:	52778
LCS Structure Name:	EAGLES NEST CABIN
LCS Structure Number:	HS-1001
Feature:	Duplex Guest Cabin #4 - 1935-36
Feature Identification Number:	95344
Type of Feature Contribution:	Contributing
IDLCS Number:	52781
LCS Structure Name:	CHEYENNE CABIN #4
LCS Structure Number:	HS-1004
Feature:	Duplex Guest Cabin #6 - 1935-36
Feature Identification Number:	95345
Type of Feature Contribution:	Contributing
IDLCS Number:	52783
LCS Structure Name:	ARAPAHOE - CABIN # 5
LCS Structure Number:	HS-1006
Feature:	Duplex Guest Cabin #7 - 1935-36
Feature Identification Number:	95346
Type of Feature Contribution:	Contributing
IDLCS Number:	52784
LCS Structure Name:	OSAGE & COLUMBINE - CABIN 7 & 8
LCS Structure Number:	HS-1007
Feature:	Ice House - 1884
Feature Identification Number:	95347
Type of Feature Contribution:	Contributing

McGraw Ranch
Rocky Mountain National Park

IDLCS Number: 52790

LCS Structure Name: SHED

LCS Structure Number: HS-1015

Feature: Laundry - 1936

Feature Identification Number: 95348

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 52787

LCS Structure Name: CABIN

LCS Structure Number: HS-1010

Feature: Log Cabin - 1884

Feature Identification Number: 95349

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 52779

LCS Structure Name: PROSPECTOR - CABIN #2

LCS Structure Number: HS-1002

Feature: Main Ranch House/Lodge - 1884

Feature Identification Number: 95350

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 52777

LCS Structure Name: OFFICE/RESIDENCE

LCS Structure Number: HS-1000

Feature: McGraw Residence - 1945

Feature Identification Number: 95351

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 52786

LCS Structure Name: BIG HORN - CABIN #9

LCS Structure Number: HS-1009

Feature: Outhouse - 1884

Feature Identification Number: 95352

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
IDLCS Number: 52788
LCS Structure Name: PHONE BOOTH
LCS Structure Number: HS-1011

Feature: Single Guest Cabin - 1935-36
Feature Identification Number: 95353
Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing
IDLCS Number: 52782
LCS Structure Name: TWIN OWLS - CABIN # 5
LCS Structure Number: HS-1005

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



View of Main Ranch House / Lodge with enclosed porch, June 2012. Source: Meg Frisbie, NPS.



Bunkhouse, looking north, June 2012. Source: Meg Frisbie, NPS.



Bunkhouse (foreground) with Main House (background), June 2012. Source: Meg Frisbie, NPS.



Photo 18(a): Bunk House and Main House, view from the south, 1998. Source: Shapins Associates.



View of Barn June 2012. Source: Meg Frisbie, NPS.



Barn, corral fence, June 2012. Source: Meg Frisbie, NPS.



View of guest cabins built circa 1936, June 2012. Source: Meg Frisbie, NPS.



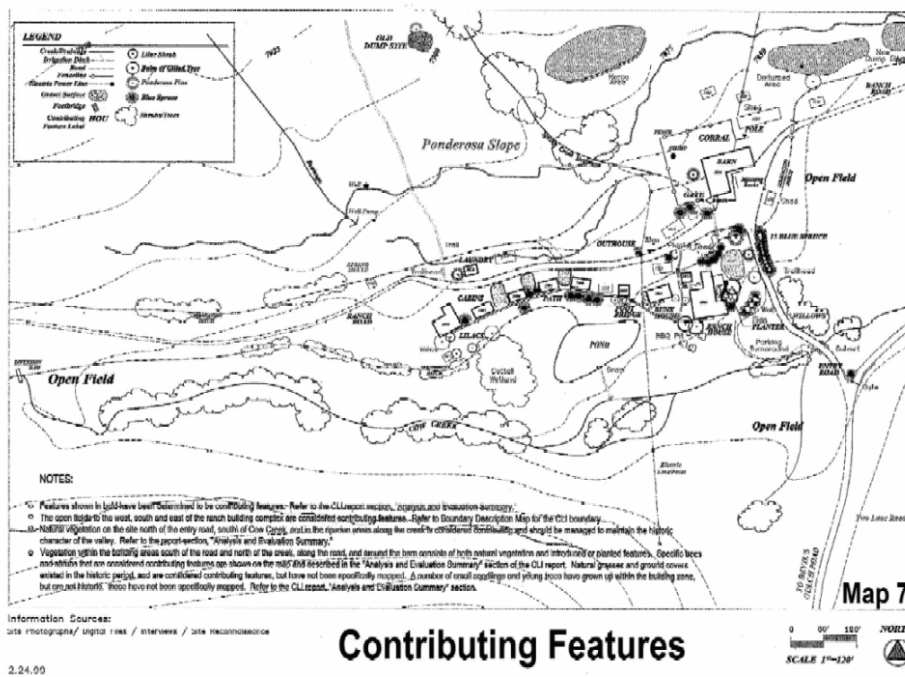
Cabin #8 at McGraw Ranch, June 2012. Source: Meg Frisbie, NPS.



Cabin #9 at McGraw Ranch, looking northeast, June 2012. Source: Meg Frisbie, NPS.



Phone booth/outhouse, June 2012. Source: Meg Frisbie, NPS.



Contributing Features Map. Source: Shapins Associates.

Circulation

The main circulation patterns on the ranch have remained substantially the same over time and are evident today. The main entry road comes down a hill to the ranch entry and the creek crossing in the same location that the original one lane road once did. Part of the original driveway loop was taken out when the septic system was put in 1936 and the original wooden bridge was removed by the National Park Service in the late 1980s. Ranch roads followed the valley topography and provided access to hay fields, diversion structures, the dumping site, and other areas around the ranch where vehicle access was needed. The main road to the west is still visible, while the ranch road to the east has faded somewhat. The ranch roads have a more primitive character than the entry road. While the entry road was graded and graveled to accommodate guest vehicles, the ranch roads were used by ranch vehicles and were simple two-track dirt roads. The section of McGraw Ranch Road that continues from the ranch entry down the valley to the east was not built until 1975.

Within the ranch building area, remnants of gravel parking areas are still visible near the main house and between the cabins. These parking areas were used during the guest ranch period. Walkways and paths were informal and provided pedestrian access throughout the building area. The path that runs in front of the cabins next to the ditch and pond and onto the main house was a primary circulation route, connecting all the cabins to the main lodge where the dining rooms were located. Also the small path that connects the office to the arrival parking area was a significant path. Another pathway that was used frequently, especially by the ranch staff, and is still evident, was the path behind the main lodge connecting the lodge to the cook's cabin, storage shed and the bunkhouse. Pedestrian bridges are still evident on this path.

The other circulation pattern that was important historically is the trail system. Miles of trails connected the ranch to the surrounding National Park and National Forest Service lands, and were used everyday during the guest season for trail rides. The trails extended out from the barn and corral where all the trial rides started, and went in all directions. Although many of the trails still exist, the trails within the ranch building complex are not all in their historic locations. Originally, as stated, the trails originated near the barn. Now, to accommodate hikers who drive their cars to the ranch, the trails have been realigned to start at the Park Service parking area and follow the ranch roads. Therefore, the historic trail configuration is no longer evident on the site.

Character defining features:

- Entry road, ranch roads, & parking areas
- Walkway in front of the cabins and bridge
- Entry/office walkway
- Back walkway and bridge

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Back Walkway - 1880s - from entry road over foot bridge to back of main

house and then to walkway in front of cabins.

Feature Identification Number: 95354

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Entry Road - 1884- from culvert north to barn and then west past the cabins to the present day trailhead.

Feature Identification Number: 95355

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Entry/Office Walkway - 1936 - from office door north .

Feature Identification Number: 97236

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Gravel Parking Areas - 1936 - small gravel areas between cabins #1007 & #1006, between cabins #1006 & #1005 and between cabins #1005 & #1004 and northeast of the main house.

Feature Identification Number: 99778

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Parking Area - 1988 - National Park Service parking area with fence

Feature Identification Number: 99779

Type of Feature Contribution: Non-Contributing

Feature: Ranch Roads - 1884 - Two-track roads, one extending from the east side of the barn driveway east along the north edge of the pasture, the other continuing the entry road from the last cabin and the laundry to the west along the creek.

Feature Identification Number: 99780

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Stone Culvert - 1988 - Culvert at Cow Creek for entry road crossing

Feature Identification Number: 99781

Type of Feature Contribution: Non-Contributing

Feature: Trail - 1988 - trail sections to the east of the entry road and extending to the north from the entry road west of the laundry

Feature Identification Number: 99782

Type of Feature Contribution: Non-Contributing

Feature: Walkway Handrails - 1980s - handrails along entry/office walkway

Feature Identification Number: 99783

Type of Feature Contribution: Non-Contributing

Feature: Walkway in front of Cabins - Built 1936, Paved late 1940s - from cabin #1009
on the south side of the buildings all the way to the main ranch house.

Feature Identification Number: 99784

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



View of entry drive and wooden bridge, June 2012. Source: Meg Frisbie, NPS.



Access drive and parking areas adjacent to cabins, June 2012. Source: Meg Frisbie, NPS.



Access drive and parking area near barn, June 2012. Source: Meg Frisbie, NPS.



Paved pedestrian paths around the Main House, June 2012. Source: Meg Frisbie, NPS.

Cluster Arrangement

All the buildings in the ranch complex are clustered together in a small area, and are set in the larger landscape of open pastures in the creek valley. (see Spatial Organization & Buildings and Structures) The original ranch buildings form two clusters, the barn complex and the main house complex. The barn and corral and associated stables and sheds are located together on the east side of the entry road facing the large east pasture. The main house/lodge, bunkhouse, log cabin, cook's cabin, and ice house were built close together on the west side of the ranch road with better views of the creek valley and surrounding rock features. Water from the irrigation ditch was diverted to the pond for drinking water before it reached the stock area. When the guest cabins were built, they were not placed as closely together as previous buildings had been. Instead, they were built in a row extending from the log cabin off to the west. This arrangement allowed each guest cabin to have a view of the creek valley and also provided them with privacy from other guests. Although all the buildings on the site are not historic, especially in the barn area, the cluster arrangements are significant in the way that they show both the historic land-use organization of the ranch and the typical layout of a guest ranch.

Character defining features

- Closely clustered building area
- Livestock maintenance area
- Original ranch building cluster

-Guest cabin row cluster

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Guest Cabin Row Cluster -1936 - cabins #1009, #1007, #1006, #1005, #1004 and laundry #1010.

Feature Identification Number: 99785

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Livestock Maintenance Area - 1880s - barn #1016, corral, hitching racks, chicken coop #1020, Quonset Hut #1021, and stables #1019.

Feature Identification Number: 99786

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Original Ranch Building Cluster - 1880s - house #1000, log cabin #1002, bunkhouse #1001, cook's cabin #1014, icehouse #1015 and outhouse #1011

Feature Identification Number: 99787

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Oblique view of Ranch from the southeast, showing cluster arrangement of cabins, barns, and main house, ca. 1936. Source: McGraw family.



Guest Cabin cluster above pond, June 2012. Source: Meg Frisbie, NPS.

Constructed Water Features

As discussed previously, the constructed water features of the McGraw Ranch consist of irrigation ditches and a pond (see Buildings & Structures).

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Ditch Culverts - 1884 - two ditch culverts which cross the entry road at the corner where the entry road turns to the west

Feature Identification Number: 99788

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Irrigation Ditch - 1884 - lower ditch which runs from its diversion point with Cow Creek east to the pond and then on in front of the cabins and then behind the main ranch house to where it joins the upper ditch

Feature Identification Number: 99789

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Irrigation Ditch - 1884 - upper ditch which runs from its diversion point with Cow Creek east above the road to the Spring Creek drainage and on into the corral, across the entry road and then east along the edge of the open pasture.

Feature Identification Number: 99790

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Pond - 1884

Feature Identification Number: 99791

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

IDLCS Number: 52792

LCS Structure Name: POND-INDIAN HEAD RANCH

LCS Structure Number: HS-X1

Feature: Pond Culvert - 1980s - culvert on the south side of the pond

Feature Identification Number: 99792

Type of Feature Contribution: Non-Contributing

Feature: Spring House - 1960s - small spring house west of the ranch buildings

Feature Identification Number: 99793

Type of Feature Contribution: Non-Contributing

Feature: Well & Well Pump - 1960s - well and well pump west of the ranch buildings

Feature Identification Number: 99794

Type of Feature Contribution: Non-Contributing

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Irrigation ditch, June 2012. Source: Meg Frisbie, NPS.



View of pond with adjacent guest cabins, June 2012. Source: Meg Frisbie, NPS.



Pond at McGraw Ranch, June 2012. Source: Meg Frisbie, NPS.



View of open field south of pond, June 2012. Compare to Photo #7. Source: Meg Frisbie, NPS.

Cultural Traditions

The McGraw Ranch represents both the role of agriculture and tourism in the Estes Park region and throughout the west in the 19th and 20th centuries. Ranches originally encompassed thousands of acres but were often run from small headquarters. In the 20th century, as development occurred and as the Federal government took ownership of large tracts of western land, the ranching industry changed as individual ranch holdings became smaller and had less access to large open tracts of public range land. As time went on, ranching became a less dominant industry and other activities gained importance. The establishment of Rocky Mountain National Park in 1915, created a tourism industry in Estes Park. Especially after W.W.II, when incomes and automobile ownership increased, tourism became more and more important in the region. There were many dude ranches in the area that were similar to the McGraw Ranch. The McGraw Ranch is the only intact dude ranch left within the boundaries of the park.

The ranch is typical of the region's guest ranches in that it continued to operate as a working ranch, the main activity for the guests was trail riding and it maintained an informal atmosphere that embodied the western ranch experience that visitors came to enjoy. The historic buildings, and the intact setting continue to illustrate that atmosphere today.

Land Use

The McGraw Ranch was historically developed as a cattle ranch in response to open meadows along Cow Creek and readily available water. Buildings were located near the creek and the building complex was surrounded by pastures and fields. Fences marked the boundaries of irrigated hay meadows. Originally, the livestock enjoyed open range and were fenced out of the cut hay fields. Over time, fences were also used to delineate ranch boundaries in an effort to fence the stock in. Cattle were corralled on the site at certain times of the year. The corral area was fenced and was located adjacent to the barn.

Irrigation ditches channeled the creek water to the ranch to provide drinking water for both people and livestock. A pond was constructed to store drinking water. The irrigation system also provided water for field irrigation. In this climate and at that elevation, irrigating the meadows and cutting hay was an important means of providing winter feed for the cattle and allowing the ranch to be a viable business.

After the McGraws bought the property, other stock - horses, chickens and a dairy cow - were kept on the ranch. The McGraws developed a wood business using timber harvested from the property. Early on, there was a saw mill located on the ranch. The ranch was also the full time residence for the McGraw family and several ranch hands, so basic domestic uses occurred on the site.

Following the establishment of the property as a guest ranch in 1936, land use activities changed somewhat. Cattle ranching continued, and guest activities were overlaid on top of

ranching routines. More horses were kept on the ranch, the staff increased in the summer and required housing, recreational activities such as cookouts, badminton, fishing, etc. took place, but because the McGraws treated their guests as part of their family, overall land-use patterns stayed fairly consistent.

Currently, of course, the ranch is vacant. Park visitors and surrounding residents hike the trails, and park along the road near the trailhead. Some vandalism has occurred. In the summer months there is a ranger stationed at the ranch, so there is a continuation of some domestic occupation, but for the most part, the previous patterns of land-use are gone.

Character defining features:

- Pastures and meadows
- Pond and ditches

Natural Systems and Features

The McGraw Ranch sits in a small, protected stream valley surrounded by striking rock outcrops and mixed conifer forest cover that provide a scenic backdrop to the valley landscape. Cow Creek runs in an east-west direction through the ranch property. The valley form is characterized by a gently sloping grade with flat, open meadows in the valley floor. The elevation of the ranch is approximately 7,880' which affords a pleasant summer climate and snowy winters.

The beneficial features of the valley were recognized in the 1880's by homesteaders and cattle ranchers. Adequate water for stock and for irrigation, low lying meadows and access to surrounding higher elevation grazing pastures made the property attractive as a site for cattle ranching. Later, the natural location, privacy and scenic beauty of the valley contributed to the success of the facility as a guest ranch. The attractive setting with its feeling of remoteness and privacy provided a get-away for guests. Varied topography and scenery coupled with the ranch's proximity to Rocky Mountain National Park provided a seemingly endless network of trails and natural areas in which to explore and recreate.

The response to the surrounding environment during the cattle ranch era and dude ranch period was to leave much of the landscape in its natural state with the exception of some functional and utilitarian interventions such as the irrigation system and pasture fencing. This approach is typical of the rural west in general and of ranching culture in particular. Even when the ranch became a guest facility, the landscape remained remarkably natural. Cabins were built in convenient but also scenic and picturesque locations oriented to the irrigation ditch and pond with views to Indian Head Rock. The landscape was not mowed or manicured. Guests were looking for an authentic western experience, and that is what was provided in terms of the setting.

Many of the buildings on the ranch including the main house and guest cabins were constructed of lumber cut and milled on the ranch property. Stone used in foundations was also taken directly from the ranch. Again, the approach to the natural environment was to use local resources--timber, stone, water, hay, open pastures--in a straightforward and sensible way.

This approach resulted in a ranch facility that fits well into its surroundings.

It should be noted that while the ranchers who occupied the McGraw Ranch did not carry out major interventions to the landscape, they would have prevented and suppressed fire on the ranch to the best of their abilities. Because ponderosa pine forests naturally depend on fire, it may be that a century of fire suppression has actually left the ranch in a condition that is different than what might have occurred “naturally.” Also, the presence of domestic grazing animals may or may not have changed the appearance of the landscape from what it might have looked like without them.

Character defining features:

- Gently sloping, open stream valley with forested, steep, side slopes
- Pulpit Rock, Indian Head Rock
- Conifer forest, ponderosa savanna, open meadows

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



View of stream, wetland, and natural features with Main House in background, June 2012.

Source: Meg Frisbie, 2012.

Small Scale Features

Small scale features give the landscape added character and feeling that would be lost if only the buildings remained. All of the small features are discussed in previous sections. (see Buildings and Structures, Circulation)

An important small scale feature that is no longer evident on the site is the pasture fencing. All the fencing was removed by the National Park Service in the 1990s. Fence lines would have provided information about how the different meadows were used, and would have indicated original property boundaries.

Character defining features

- Corral
- Hitching racks
- Bench
- Stump
- Wooden pedestrian bridge
- Stone pedestrian bridge
- Small Planter
- Power poles
- Walkway in front of the cabins
- Entry/office walkway
- Cook's cabin walkway

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Bench - date unknown, predates 1948- in front of the barn

Feature Identification Number: 99795

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Corral - 1880s - corral fence built of peeled and unpeeled logs

Feature Identification Number: 99796

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Hitching Racks - 1880s

Feature Identification Number: 99797

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Horse Arena - 1980s - flattened arena area north of the ranch buildings with timber retaining edge

Feature Identification Number: 99798

Type of Feature Contribution: Non-Contributing

Feature: JackLeg Fence - 1988 - fence around parking area at entry

Feature Identification Number: 99799

Type of Feature Contribution: Non-Contributing

Feature: Original Dump - 1880s - small area beneath large ponderosa tree with visible evidence of use such as old cans and scrap metal

Feature Identification Number: 99800

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Planter - 1940s - Stone planter east of the main house

Feature Identification Number: 99801

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Power Lines - date unknown

Feature Identification Number: 100253

Type of Feature Contribution: Non-Contributing

Feature: Power Pole - 1960s - pole west of the laundry near the well pump

Feature Identification Number: 100254

Type of Feature Contribution: Non-Contributing

Feature: Power Poles - late 1930s - 4 power poles: just west of the bunkhouse #1001, just east of the outhouse #1011, just west of the corral fence, north of the barn.

Feature Identification Number: 100255

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Stone Barbecue - 1980s - outdoor stone barbecue south of main house

Feature Identification Number: 100256

Type of Feature Contribution: Non-Contributing

Feature: Stone Pedestrian Bridge - date unknown, predates 1948 - just south east of the log cabin #1002

Feature Identification Number: 100257

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Stone Pedestrian Bridge Railing - 1980s - wooden railing on stone bridge

Feature Identification Number: 100258

Type of Feature Contribution: Non-Contributing

Feature: Stone Planter - 1950s - circular stone planter south of entry road behind main house

Feature Identification Number: 100259

Type of Feature Contribution: Non-Contributing

Feature: Stump - tree shows in 1912 photos, tree came down in late 1940s, early 1950s -
in the corral west of the barn

Feature Identification Number: 100260

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Wooden Pedestrian Bridge - date unknown, predates 1948 - behind the main
house, near the ice house

Feature Identification Number: 100261

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



View of small planter edged in stone, June 2012. Source: Meg Frisbie, NPS.



View of kiosk, trash cans, and signs, June 2012. Source: Meg Frisbie, NPS.



Wood bridge over Cow Creek, June 2012. Source: Meg Frisbie, NPS.



Picnic table adjacent to the guest cabins, June 2012. Source: Meg Frisbie, NPS.



Corral stump, 1998. Source: Shapins Associates.

Spatial Organization

The spatial organization of the ranch is not unlike other western ranches in that buildings and roadways are organized to fit both the site topography and the functional needs of a ranch. The entire ranch complex is located in a wide portion of the stream valley with open meadows to

the west, south across the creek, and east. The site is relatively flat and its southern exposure gives the individual buildings exposure to sunlight and views up and down the creek valley. The ponderosa forest and grassland behind the buildings provide a protected backdrop while the creek serves as both a convenient water source and a scenic foreground.

The original house and associated bunkhouse, ice house and cook's cabin were clustered together and located upstream of the barn, stables, woodshed and chicken coop. The entry drive served both the main house and the barn equally well. All the buildings are clustered in a small area, and although there are functional groups of structures; kitchen, ice house and cook's cabin; barn, stable, storage and chicken coop; guest cabins and laundry, the division between different uses is not strict. The built landscape forms a compact, efficient center that has an informal character overall. Surrounding the buildings, the open meadows in the valley floor served as pastures and cut hay fields. Beyond the pastures, the natural landscape has been relatively undisturbed, although evidence of grazing and woodcutting could certainly be found, and some informal ranch roads run across the property to provide access to more remote areas.

When the property became a guest ranch, landscape features were used to create some delineation of use areas. Blue spruce were planted along the entry drive both perhaps as a windbreak and to provide an entry feature. Trees were also planted between some of the cabins to delineate parking areas, contribute to the natural aesthetic qualities, shelter the dwellings from wind and sun, and provide for privacy. The pond and ditch became more of a landscape feature when the ranch became a guest ranch as the cabins were oriented to face the water, and some trees were planted in front of the cabins along the ditch path.

Character defining features:

-Clustered building complex sited to take advantage of water, topography, exposure and views

Topography

The Estes Park region is characterized by mountain slopes and ridges cut through with streams and drainages. Cow Creek runs west to east from its origin in the high country above Bridal Veil Falls to where it drains into West Creek about a mile past the McGraw Ranch buildings. West Creek is a tributary of the North Fork of the Big Thompson River, and their confluence is north east of the McGraw Ranch at the town of Glen Haven. At the McGraw Ranch site, the Cow Creek valley is fairly open and gentle with grassy meadows and forested side slopes.

The ranch site is also distinguished by large rock outcroppings which surround the site, Indian Head Rock to the south and Pulpit Rock to the north. In general, the valley slopes from west to east although the actual ranch complex sits on the north side of the creek where the land slopes gradually from north to south toward the creek. The ranch elevation is approximately 7880'. Buildings, roads and the irrigation system are sited based on the site's topography. Buildings are placed in the valley center above the creek. The roads follow the valley edges and conform to the land contours.

The creek valley configuration allowed for a gravity irrigation system without elaborate pumping systems. An upper ditch was built that brings water from the creek above the ranch

and into the corral and then across the entry road out to the field east of the barn. This ditch provided drinking water, stock water and field irrigation. Another lower ditch pulled water out of Cow Creek and carried it into a storage pond. The slope of the valley is steep enough to carry the ditch water without pumping, but flat enough that although the pond required an embankment, it was not a huge structure. During the 1980s, the ranch owners changed the ditch and pond configuration somewhat. The pond was enlarged so that the embankment is bigger today than it was historically. The lower ditch was shifted some to drop into the pond further to the west. Currently since they have not been used in recent years, the ditches are beginning to fill in and so are less evident than they once were.

Additionally in the 1980s, certain projects changed the site topography above the barn and behind the ranch buildings up on the hill. Overall, however, the topography of the ranch site has not been altered significantly. The large pattern of the land, a creek valley in the mountains, is still completely legible.

Character defining features:

- Gently sloping creek valley
- Steep rock outcrops
- Ditch and pond system

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Gently Sloping Creek Valley

Feature Identification Number: 100262

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Steep Rock Outcrops: Pulpit Rock & Indian Head Rock

Feature Identification Number: 100263

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



Cow Creek Valley with surrounding foothills and mountains, June 2012. Source: Meg Frisbie, NPS.



Terrain and steep slopes surround the McGraw Ranch, June 2012. Source: Meg Frisbie, NPS.

Vegetation

The vegetation at the McGraw Ranch can be categorized in three ways: the vegetation that was planted by ranch residents, the natural vegetation on and around the site, and the cultivated grasses in the pastures and the fields. All three categories are significant because they reflect both the history of land use on the ranch and the occupant's attitudes toward the landscape. The vegetation that was planted defined space and provided aesthetic enjoyment for both the family and their guests. The surrounding landscape with its native vegetation provided natural beauty and context. The open pastures and fields provided food for livestock, but also created a beautiful open setting for the ranch and guest buildings.

The spruce trees that were planted defined the entry drive and created separation between cabins and parking areas. The Balm of Gilead trees reminded the family of gardens in Pennsylvania and provided a feeling of leafy shade near the office entrance and around the main house. Lilac shrubs provided spring color and fragrance as did small flower gardens around the main house. Some of the spruce trees that grew along the west side of the entry drive and some from around the cabins suffered from budworm disease and died in the 1980s. Two large Balm of Gilead trees that graced the entrance road have fallen down, their large trunks can be seen along the driveway. Several large Balm of Gilead trees are still growing in their original locations at the southwest corner of the main house, in front of the log cabin, and on the east side of the main house. Other younger trees are growing around the ranch buildings in several locations as the older trees have suckered or reseeded themselves. Although each of these seedlings is not historic, the presence of this species of tree on this site is significant. While many of the saplings are becoming nuisance plants, perhaps some of the larger saplings that are not located right next to buildings or walkways could be saved, pruned and maintained in order to preserve the presence of the historic trees. The lilac shrubs are still growing in their original locations, but the flower garden that has been described on the east side of the main house has disappeared and the stone planter behind the main lodge appeared to be empty. There are several Ponderosa Pine trees growing in the building area. These may have grown up naturally or been planted, but their presence is shown on some of the historic photos, so they are considered significant.

The natural vegetation on the site does not appear to have been significantly disturbed during the occupation of the ranch over time, though certainly there have been changes. The stream corridor bends a little bit further south than it once did. Ranch residents relate that the flooding that occurred in 1976 changed the channel path from earlier years (Fran Grooters and Ruth McGraw Interviews, 1998). The stream had beaver activity along it during the historic period. There are beavers in the Cow Creek valley today, because they were reintroduced by the Colorado Department of Wildlife in 1985. Without the ongoing maintenance to keep the ditches clear of vegetation that occurred when the ranch was a working cattle ranch, willows have grown up along the lower irrigation ditch. Above the ranch buildings, ponderosas grow in an open forest as they would have historically. However, originally, the ridge had more Douglas fir mixed in with the ponderosas. Many of the fir trees were killed by spruce budworm in the early 1980s (RMNP Environmental Assessment, p. 21). The ridge on the south side of the ranch is north facing and made up of mostly lodgepole pine with some ponderosa pine.

Typical of western ranches, the site was not mowed and manicured (except for the hay meadows). As a working ranch, the site was left alone, and later as a guest ranch, the attitude toward the landscape did not change. The natural landscape was considered beautiful as it was. Guests were interested in an authentic ranch experience, and therefore, the ranch was maintained as any ranch would have been with an eye toward efficiency and function, but also with an appreciation of the beauty of the natural landscape.

Finally, the open meadows were used as grazing pasture and irrigated fields from the time the ranch was established in the 1800s. During the period from 1909 to 1973 when the McGraws owned the ranch, the meadows in the creek valley near the ranch buildings were hayed. Frank McGraw planted alfalfa and timothy in the meadows to the south, east, and west of the ranch complex. In addition, horses and cattle grazed the meadows. In 1989 when the National Park Service performed research for the Environmental Assessment, they found leafy spurge (*Euphorbia esula*) in the south meadow. Leafy spurge was not present on the ranch during the McGraw ownership, as far as the ranch residents remember (Fran Grooters and Ruth McGraw Interviews, 1998). Research did not reveal which specific grass species existed historically, but they would have been consistent with high elevation mountain meadows. Although the fences have been removed, the overall appearance of the meadows has remained the same. The loss of the fences is significant because it is hard to read which areas were open pasture and which were irrigated fields used for cutting hay without them. However, even without the fences, the fields function as an attractive open setting for the buildings.

The vegetation on the site is a mixture of native and introduced species, and obviously not all the vegetation is historic. For the purposes of the CLI, the vegetation was considered both in terms of the three categories previously described and in terms of spatial zones. Vegetation within the building zone was considered in terms of whether individual plants were historic, while vegetation outside the building zone was considered more in terms of which types of vegetative cover and pattern would have been consistent with the historic period. Therefore, in the building zone which is the area north of Cow Creek and south of the entry road, and also including the area immediately around the laundry, cabin #1008, and the barn buildings, specific trees and shrubs are called out on the contributing features map as being historically significant. Outside the building zone, specific plants are not listed, but broader patterns of vegetation are called out as contributing.

Character defining features:

- Planted vegetation: Spruce trees, Balm of Gilead trees, Lilac shrubs, Ponderosa Pines
- Natural vegetation patterns: grasses, conifer slopes, ponderosa park setting, riparian vegetation along the creek
- Fields and pastures
- Non-manicured character of ranch complex

Character-defining Features:

Feature: Balm of Gilead Trees within the Building Area - 2 at southwest corner of main ranch house, 2 east of main ranch house.

Feature Identification Number: 100264

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Blue Spruce Trees within the Building Area - 18 near driveway, 5 north of main house, 3 near corral, 1 east of main house, along cabin walkway, 1 at SE corner of McGraw Residence (#1009).

Feature Identification Number: 100265

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Fields & Pastures - large meadow east of the entry drive, large meadow west of building complex, large meadow south of the ranch buildings along the entry road

Feature Identification Number: 100266

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Lilac Shrubs within the Building Area - 3 south of McGraw Residence #1009

Feature Identification Number: 100267

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Natural Vegetation beyond the building area - ponderosa pines north of the ranch buildings, riparian vegetation along Cow Creek, native grasses throughout the site, evergreens on valley sideslopes.

Feature Identification Number: 100268

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Ponderosa Pine Trees within the Building Area - 2 west of driveway where it turns west, 1 west of barn in corral, 1 west of laundry

Feature Identification Number: 100269

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Landscape Characteristic Graphics:



View of valley landscape showing native Ponderosa woodland, June 2012. Source: Meg Frisbie, NPS.



Spruce trees adjacent to the guest cabins, June 2012. Source: Meg Frisbie, NPS.



Ponderosa vegetation near the ranch building cluster, June 2012. Source: Meg Frisbie, NPS.



Balm of Gilead trees on east side of main house, 1998. As of 2012, the trees next to the building have been removed. Source: Shapins Associates.

Views And Vistas

The scenic beauty and natural setting of the ranch property was an important reason for the original settlement of that particular location in the valley and continued to be important as part of the guest ranch experience. The view of the ranch from the entry road was important because of the sense of arrival that is felt as a visitor comes down the hill and sees the ranch buildings nestled in the creek valley below Pulpit Rock. The ranch looks protected and secluded in its own private valley. The views up and down the valley are also important. The views from the ranch buildings across the creek valley to Indian Head Rock must have been appreciated by guests in their cabins and by anyone sitting on the porch of the main house. Pulpit Rock, behind the ranch forms a dramatic backdrop from many points in the ranch complex.

Character defining features:

- View of the ranch from the entry road
- Views from the ranch property up and down the valley
- Views from the ranch of Indian Head Rock & Pulpit Rock

Character-defining Features:

Feature: View of the Ranch from the Entry Road

Feature Identification Number: 100270

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Views from the Ranch to Indian Head Rock & Pulpit Rock

Feature Identification Number: 100271

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Feature: Views from the Ranch up and down the Valley

Feature Identification Number: 100272

Type of Feature Contribution: Contributing

Condition

Condition Assessment and Impacts

Condition Assessment: Fair

Assessment Date: 09/26/2002

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

The landscape was assessed in fair condition. Superintendent concurred on 9/26/2002.

Condition Assessment: Good

Assessment Date: 09/30/2004

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

The park improved the condition of several buildings and landscape features and provided information needed to justify the change from fair to good condition.

Condition Assessment: Good

Assessment Date: 05/14/2009

Condition Assessment Explanatory Narrative:

McGraw Ranch caretaker Cheri Yost reports that work required to update the potential threats to the landscape have been completed. The landscape condition remains at good. Superintendent Vaughn Baker concurred on 5/14/2009.

Impacts

Type of Impact: Deferred Maintenance

External or Internal: Internal

Impact Description: The buildings, structures, and landscape require on-going maintenance.

Type of Impact: Exposure To Elements

External or Internal: External

Impact Description: Some of the roofs are leaking and some windows are broken.

Type of Impact: Vandalism/Theft/Arson

External or Internal: External

Impact Description: Some of the buildings have been broken into.

Stabilization Costs

Landscape Stabilization Cost: 0.00

Landscape Stabilization Cost Explanatory Description:

A FY 2005 funding request in the amount of \$25,800 for a Long-Term Treatment Plan for McGraw Ranch Cultural Landscape is listed on the PMIS online database.

Treatment

Treatment

Approved Treatment: Undetermined

Approved Treatment Costs

Landscape Treatment Cost: 0.00

Landscape Approved Treatment Cost Explanatory Description:

LCS treatment costs were taken from the on-line LCS database, which contains 18 structures. The costs, \$372,000, are unapproved and represent ultimate treatment costs. The costs estimates are dated 8/1/1996 (HS-1012), 4/1/1999 (HS-1015), and 6/1/1999. Ultimate treatment costs estimates were made by the Regional Office and based on costs at similar facilities. In addition, interim treatment costs, also found on the LCS database, total \$55,200.

LCS treatment costs related to landscape were also taken from the online LCS database. The costs, \$2,500 (HS-1016A) are unapproved and represent ultimate treatment costs. The costs estimates are dated 6/1/1998 (HS-1016B) & 4/1/1999 (HS-1016A). Ultimate treatment costs estimates were made by the Regional Office and based on costs at similar facilities. In addition, interim treatment costs total \$100 (HS-1016A).

HS-1016A Pond
HS-1016B Irrigation Ditch

Bibliography and Supplemental Information

Bibliography

Citation Title:	Rough It with Ease: The Story of the McGraw Ranch
Year of Publication:	0
Source Name:	Library Of Congress/Dewey Decimal
Citation Type:	Both Graphic And Narrative
Citation Location:	Estes Park Library
Citation Title:	"Landon Summer Home Made Ready"
Year of Publication:	0
Source Name:	Other
Citation Type:	Both Graphic And Narrative
Citation Location:	Ruth McGraw personal files
Citation Title:	McGraw Ranch Files
Year of Publication:	0
Source Name:	Other
Citation Type:	Both Graphic And Narrative
Citation Location:	Estes Park Museum
Citation Title:	"Henry (Hank) Farrer"
Year of Publication:	0
Source Name:	Other
Citation Type:	Narrative
Citation Location:	Estes Park Library
Citation Title:	"Rocky Mountain National Park to Support McGraw Restoration"
Year of Publication:	0
Source Name:	Other
Citation Type:	Narrative
Citation Location:	Estes Park Library

Citation Title: "The McGraw Legacy"

Year of Publication: 0

Source Name: Other

Citation Type: Both Graphic And Narrative

Citation Location: Estes Park Library

Citation Title: Brief History of McGraw Ranch

Year of Publication: 0

Source Name: Other

Citation Type: Narrative

Citation Location: Fran Grooters personal files

Citation Title: Draft Environmental Assessment/Assessment of Effect

Year of Publication: 0

Source Name: Other

Citation Type: Narrative

Citation Location: Rocky Mountain National Park Archives

Citation Title: Intensive Surface Survey of McGraw Ranch Site

Year of Publication: 0

Source Name: Other

Citation Type: Graphic

Citation Location: Rocky Mountain National Park Archives

Citation Title: National Register of Historic Places Registration Form: McGraw Ranch

Year of Publication: 0

Source Name: Other

Citation Type: Both Graphic And Narrative

Citation Location: Colorado State Historic Office