

# **The Bureau of Reclamation's Civilian Conservation Corps Legacy: 1933 - 1942**

by

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## **MISSION STATEMENTS**

The mission of the Department of the Interior is to protect and provide access to our Nation's natural and cultural heritage and honor our trust responsibilities to Indian tribes and our commitments to island communities.

The mission of the Bureau of Reclamation is to manage, develop, and protect water and related resources in an environmentally and economically sound manner in the interest of the American public.

# Preface

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In June 2000, the first comprehensive study of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) program within the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) became available with the initial printing of this book. Prior to that, the tremendous accomplishments of the young men who labored on Reclamation projects during the Great Depression had received little attention. My goal in producing the book was to highlight some of those achievements by identifying the numerous Reclamation CCC camps and describing the wide range of work activities they performed. The desire to make information available sooner rather than later, combined with a modest budget, imposed limitations on research and writing time, and on the number of copies printed.

The distribution of the last of the original volumes in 2008 coincided with the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of President Franklin Roosevelt's launching of the New Deal. Celebrations across the country heightened public awareness of, and appreciation for, the enduring legacy of many New Deal programs, including the CCC. It seemed the perfect occasion to revisit the subject of Reclamation's CCC endeavors with the intent of updating and expanding the book prior to reprinting it. Further research allowed me to fill in many data gaps and expand on the material presented, particularly the description of camp buildings, the various companies associated with different camps, and some of the project activities. The fortuitous discovery and inclusion of more historic photographs of the camps, its enrollees, and the work accomplished provide vivid illustration of Reclamation's CCC program. Additional current views of a number of known surviving features constructed by Reclamation CCC enrollees offer a glimpse of the legacy left behind.

Without the assistance of many others, it would not have been possible for me to pull together the material to revise this book. A number of Reclamation's cultural resources staff contributed generously to the effort. Jim Bailey conducted valuable research at the National Archives in Denver. Kelsey Doncaster and John Martinson expressed enthusiastic interest in the subject and tracked down more material than I ever anticipated. Renee Kolvet, co-author of *The Civilian Conservation Corps in Nevada*, graciously answered my many questions about Reclamation camps in that State. Dale Austin, Richard Boston, Warren Hurley, James Kangas, Ray Leicht, Lynne MacDonald, and Bill Vincent also contributed.

Barbara Boyer, now retired, negotiated the preservation of two remaining CCC buildings at Camp Pleasant Grove in Utah, and shared information with me.

Other Reclamation staff provided help in various ways. Margaret Bibbey, Laura Crandall, and Yvonne Daniel in Boise offered to take photographs for me of features built by Camp BR-27 enrollees at Walcott Park in Idaho. John Flowers in the Grand Coulee Power Office responded within one hour to my request for current photos of work completed by Camp BR-48 at Coulee Dam Park in Washington. Steve McCall clarified information on the Grand Valley Project CCC camps in Colorado. Patty Alexander lent me a souvenir pictorial brochure of Camp BR-61 that had belonged to her father, who spent time there as an enrollee. Likewise, Charles Brown, a retired Reclamation employee, brought me a 1936 brochure of the CCC's Phoenix District. Jedediah Rogers thoughtfully and carefully peer reviewed the draft. Finalizing the publication required the expert skills of graphics specialists and an editor. Teri Manross carefully edited and formatted the document, Cindy Gray scanned and enhanced a vast number of historic images, and Bill White designed the cover.

My appreciation also extends to those outside of Reclamation who kindly responded to requests for written materials and/or photographs and who have granted permission for the use of those materials. The list includes Deb Dennis, Human Systems Research, New Mexico; Dan Carter, Bureau of Land Management, New Mexico; Sharon Edmond, Phillips County Museum, Montana; Brant Loflin, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, South Dakota; Yael Marcus, Soil Water Air Protection Enterprise (SWAPE), California; Graciela Morales-Scott, Scott Consulting Services, California; Lori Nordland, Shoshone Irrigation District, Wyoming; Susan Patterson, Deaver Irrigation District, Wyoming; Lou Ann Speulda-Drews, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Nevada; Todd Thibodeau, Wyoming State Parks; Dan Thornton, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission; Mary Quirolo, Marron and Associates, Inc., New Mexico; and Linda Morton-Keithley, Idaho State Historical Society.

A majority of research for this project was conducted at the National Archives in Denver. I cannot thank the knowledgeable staff there enough for their responsiveness and willingness to help locate records in the vast collections stored there. Marene Baker, Eric Bittner, and Rick Martinez all provided assistance on many occasions.

Finally, I am grateful to my manager, Richard Rizzi, for allowing me the opportunity to pursue this project.

To all of the above and others who assisted in one way or another, I express gratitude.

Christine Pfaff



## About the Author

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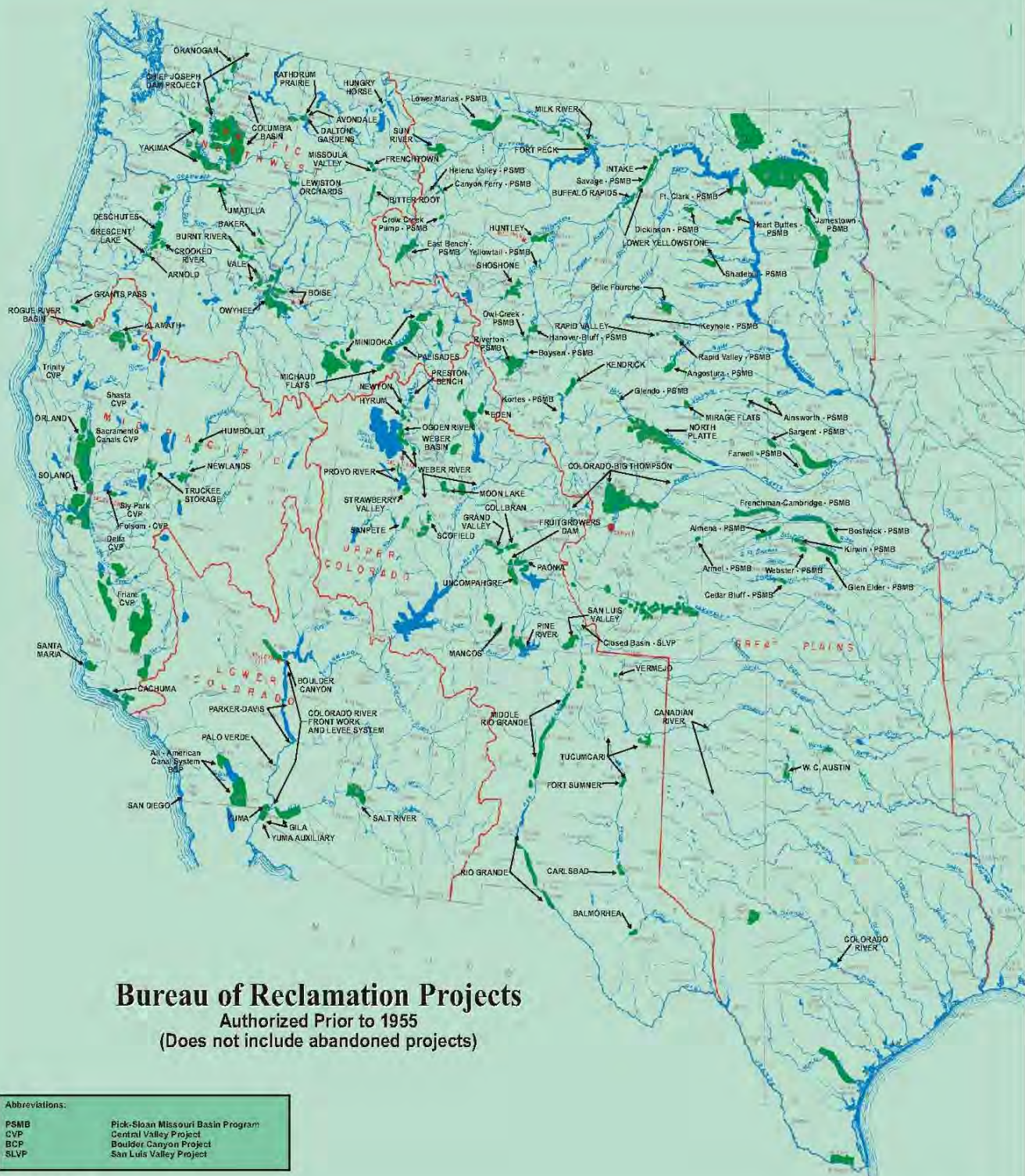
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Based on 1968 Map

# Introduction

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As menacing dry winds and duststorms gathered momentum across the High Plains in early 1933, newly elected President Franklin Roosevelt formulated sweeping plans in the Nation's capital for emergency disaster relief. The entire country was in the grips of the Great Depression, and jobless men everywhere struggled to earn enough money to buy food for their families. For the country's youth, the situation was equally desperate. Hundreds of thousands of young men from economically stricken households searched in vain for work. Against this bleak backdrop, Roosevelt announced plans in March 1933 for the creation of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), an agency aimed at conserving the Nation's depleted natural resources and putting unemployed youth to work.<sup>1</sup> Within a short time, CCC camps had been established across the country, and young men were recruited to work on a myriad of conservation projects overseen by various Federal agencies including the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation). Of all the New Deal programs instituted by Roosevelt to combat the economic hardships of the Great Depression, probably none was as popular and successful as the CCC.

Those familiar with the accomplishments of the CCC inevitably think of handsome buildings, picnic shelters, retaining walls, and other improvements carefully crafted of natural materials such as stone and log. Although these features are remarkable examples of the CCC legacy, they represent just a small fraction of the work completed. Roughly 75 percent of all CCC enrollees labored on projects administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and of these young men, more than half were assigned to camps in national, State, or private forests, under the direction of the U.S. Forest Service. The work of these camps can be divided into two broad categories: forest protection and forest improvement. Enrollees fought fires, planted millions of trees, built trails and roads, and constructed administrative and recreational facilities on forest lands. The U.S. Soil Conservation Service (SCS), established in 1935 (also within the U.S. Department of Agriculture) received the second largest number of camps within that agency.<sup>2</sup> The work of the CCC assigned to the SCS focused on applying soil conservation techniques to control erosion of agricultural lands and streambanks. Among other things, the young men contoured fields, terraced hillsides, planted cover crops, built small dams, erected fencing, and assisted in nurseries.

Camps not under the U.S. Department of Agriculture were almost all allotted to the Department of the Interior (Interior), with the majority of them assigned to the National Park Service. The CCC improvements to national parks resulted in many of the outstanding rustic structures that have come to epitomize the program. CCC work within national parks extended to a wide range of other activities, though, such as fire protection and prevention, control and eradication of insects destroying forests, and archeological excavations and historical restorations.

The association between the CCC and Reclamation, also within Interior, is far less recognized.<sup>3</sup> Even though the program was much smaller than within other bureaus, the CCC made enduring contributions to Reclamation and assisted significantly in furthering the irrigation development goals of the agency during the drought years of the Great Depression. CCC assistance also afforded Reclamation the opportunity to expand on its primary mission and develop recreational amenities for public benefit at a number of its reservoirs. Reclamation placed great value on the CCC and reported on program accomplishments repeatedly in its monthly journal *The Reclamation Era*.

A brief history of the national CCC program at the beginning of the book is followed by an overview of Reclamation's program. The bulk of the volume consists of forms that describe the history and activities of each Reclamation camp. Wherever possible, information on the final disposition of camp property is incorporated. Accompanying the forms are historic photographs, and, in some cases, images of CCC-built features as they appear today. Site plans found for various camps are also included. For ease in locating information on specific camps, the appendices include tables that sort camps by camp number, Reclamation project name, and State.

Since the completion of the original study in 2000, interest in the CCC has expanded greatly. Much has been written to inform the public about the inspiring achievements of the young men who joined the CCC out of desperation. It is hoped that this revised edition will further highlight some of the accomplishments of Reclamation's CCC program.

## Endnotes for Introduction

<sup>1</sup> Initially called the Emergency Conservation Work (ECW), the program was commonly known as the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and will be referred to as such throughout this document.

<sup>2</sup> The U.S. Soil Conservation Service originated in 1933 as the Soil Erosion Service, which was located within the Department of the Interior.

<sup>3</sup> The Bureau of Reclamation was created under the Reclamation Act of 1902. Initially designated the United States Reclamation Service and placed within the United States Geological Survey, Reclamation became an independent bureau within the Department of the Interior in 1907. In 1923, Congress again reorganized the bureau and changed its name to the Bureau of Reclamation.



## Chapter 1

# Historical Overview of the Civilian Conservation Corps<sup>1</sup>

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Before his first day as President of the United States drew to a close, Franklin Roosevelt had broadly outlined his bold concept for a CCC to the American people. In his inaugural address on March 4, 1933, he stated:

Our greatest primary task is to put people to work. This is no unsolvable problem if we face it wisely and courageously. It can be accomplished in part by direct recruiting by the Government itself, treating the task as we would treat the emergency of war, but at the same time, through this employment, accomplishing greatly needed projects to stimulate and reorganize the use of our natural resources.<sup>2</sup>

By the early 1930s, the results of decades of irresponsible use of the Nation's natural resources were apparent. Widespread deforestation and excessive cultivation had eroded slopes and stripped native sod that held the soil in place. Dryland farmers on the Great Plains watched helplessly as their crops shriveled in the drought, and duststorms carried away their bare fields. Valuable natural resources had been destroyed faster than they could be replenished. Roosevelt's ambitious plan combined conservation projects with unemployed youth in an innovative new program to the benefit of both human and natural resources. As Robert Fechner, the first CCC director, later said: "Prior to the inauguration of the Civilian Conservation Corps, conservation of resources was allied with the weather, in that there was plenty of talk about both and not much done about either."<sup>3</sup>

By the end of Roosevelt's first month in office, Congress had acted upon his recommendation and passed "An Act for the relief of unemployment through the performance of useful public works and other purposes." The President signed the bill into law (Public Law 73-5) on March 31, 1933, and quickly moved ahead with the new initiative. By Executive Order No. 6101 of April 5, 1933, Roosevelt

appointed Robert Fechner, a former machinist and union official, director of the program, initially called the Emergency Conservation Work (ECW).<sup>4</sup>

Assigned the administrative and decisionmaking functions of the program, the director's office developed regulations on matters such as the welfare, discipline, and pay of the enrollees and approved enrollment quotas for each state. The director's office also had responsibility for conducting regular camp inspections.<sup>5</sup> Technically, Fechner had complete authority for the program, although the president retained the right of final approval of camp locations.

Executive Order No. 6101 also established an advisory council of representatives from the U.S. Departments of Labor, War, Interior<sup>6</sup>, and Agriculture to coordinate oversight of the program and to create a forum for discussing policy issues. The U.S. Department of Labor was charged with selecting and enrolling youths upon the recommendation of State relief agencies. The U.S. Department of War (Army) had the enormous responsibility for enrollee administration, transportation, housing, food, clothing, supplies, medical care, education, discipline, physical conditioning, and recreational activities. Individual camps were placed under the charge of U.S. Army officers. Initially, these were regular officers but, within several years, they were replaced by reserve officers from all military branches. Interior and the U.S. Department of Agriculture proposed locations for the CCC camps, formulated work projects, and supervised the daily labor. Organizationally, the CCC program was divided into nine regional Corps Areas, or administrative units, each under the command of an Army General. The CCC Corps Areas were identical to existing Army Corps Areas. The Western States fell among three Corps Areas: the Seventh, Eighth, and Ninth.<sup>7</sup>

Initial enrollment in the CCC was limited to unemployed single men between the ages of 18 and 25 who were U.S. citizens and successfully passed a physical exam. For the most part, these were discouraged youths, unable to secure jobs because they had no work experience and little education. They were described as "a weaponless army whose recruits came from broken homes, highway trails and relief shelters . . ."<sup>8</sup> Despairing young men from all over the country seized the opportunity to join the CCC and receive a \$30-per-month paycheck, of which \$22 to \$25 had to be sent home to family dependents.<sup>9</sup>

American Indians could not join the CCC at first, but this restriction was lifted within a few weeks of the program's creation because of the dire conditions on many of the reservations. The Office of Indian Affairs within Interior separately handled the selection of Native American enrollees and administration of the CCC program on reservations. The Native American CCC program adapted rules to meet the special circumstances of the enrollees. Most of them were married, and, therefore, allowed to live at home. Age restrictions did not apply. A unique

aspect of the Indian program was the participation of local tribal councils in its administration. By the time the CCC ended, more than 80,000 Native Americans had participated in the program.<sup>10</sup>

Enrollment in the CCC also expanded early on to include Local Experienced Men (LEMs). These were older men drawn from communities in proximity to CCC camps, who taught valuable work skills to the young and inexperienced enrollees. World War I veterans also joined the ranks of the CCC following the issuance of an Executive order on May 11, 1933. The veterans, mostly in their mid-40s, were selected by the Veterans Administration and assigned to special camps operated less stringently than regular ones. Although the CCC legislation officially forbade racial discrimination, blacks and other minorities did not escape prejudice within the program.<sup>11</sup> A limited number of blacks were enrolled and, after July 1935, they were restricted to segregated camps.<sup>12</sup>

At the urging of the President, the CCC enrolled its first 25,000 young men by April 6, 1933. The initial camp, appropriately called Camp Roosevelt, was established on April 17, 1933, at George Washington National Forest near Luray, Virginia. Less than 3 months later, an astonishing 300,000 men from all over the country had been enrolled, transported, and settled in almost 1,500 camps. According to Fechner, “it was the most rapid large scale mobilization of men the country had ever witnessed.”<sup>13</sup>

Each CCC camp had a normal capacity of 200 enrollees. The Army, as part of its general oversight of the camps, assumed responsibility for their construction. Originally, the Army intended to erect tent camps everywhere, but before long, it suggested the construction of wood buildings instead. An industry group known as the Forest Products, Inc. supported the Army’s proposal. Both entities advocated that the use of frame buildings would create jobs in the lumber and construction fields. The CCC approved this alternative in 1933. Tents continued to be preferred in some situations, especially in warmer regions, and if they were meant for the camp’s duration, they featured wood floors or “platforms” and wooden frames. Tents also sometimes provided interim housing pending the completion of more permanent buildings.

The Army developed standard designs for permanent (called rigid) wood buildings resembling barracks and provided detailed instructions for their construction from ground clearing to finish work. Where possible, the Army contracted with local labor to construct camp buildings in order to promote good public relations with the camps’ surrounding communities. CCC enrollees stepped in to perform the construction when local workers were not available.

In 1934, the Army began the use of wood portable buildings in CCC camps. They came in prefabricated panels for easy assembly and were sturdy and

multi-functional. By 1935, the portable buildings were being mass-produced based on their cost efficiency and re-use potential.<sup>14</sup> In 1936, portable buildings became the official standard for CCC camps. The Army prescribed specific dimensions for different building types, although some latitude was given. For example, barracks typically measured 20 feet by 130 feet, officers' quarters 20 feet by 40 feet, and school buildings 20 feet by 60 feet. Portable buildings rarely, if ever, had foundations. Board and batten or clapboard siding was applied to exterior walls. Roll roofing or shingles covered the roofs<sup>15</sup> (see figures 1.1 and 1.2).



Figure 1.1 Enrollees erecting mess hall, looking southwest, Camp BR-58, Yakima Project, Washington, July 1, 1938.

Just as the Army developed plans for standard building types, it also prescribed standard camp plans. Not surprisingly, camps resembled temporary military installations. The basic plan was a “U” shape consisting of about 24 buildings. These included barracks, officers' quarters, mess hall and kitchen, administration building, bathhouse, and garage. With the Government emphasis on developing healthy, educated young men, the camp plans usually included an education building, infirmary, and recreation hall. The Army also developed a standard “summer only” or tent camp plan, which included a combination of buildings and sleeping tents.

## Chapter 1: Historical Overview of the Civilian Conservation Corps

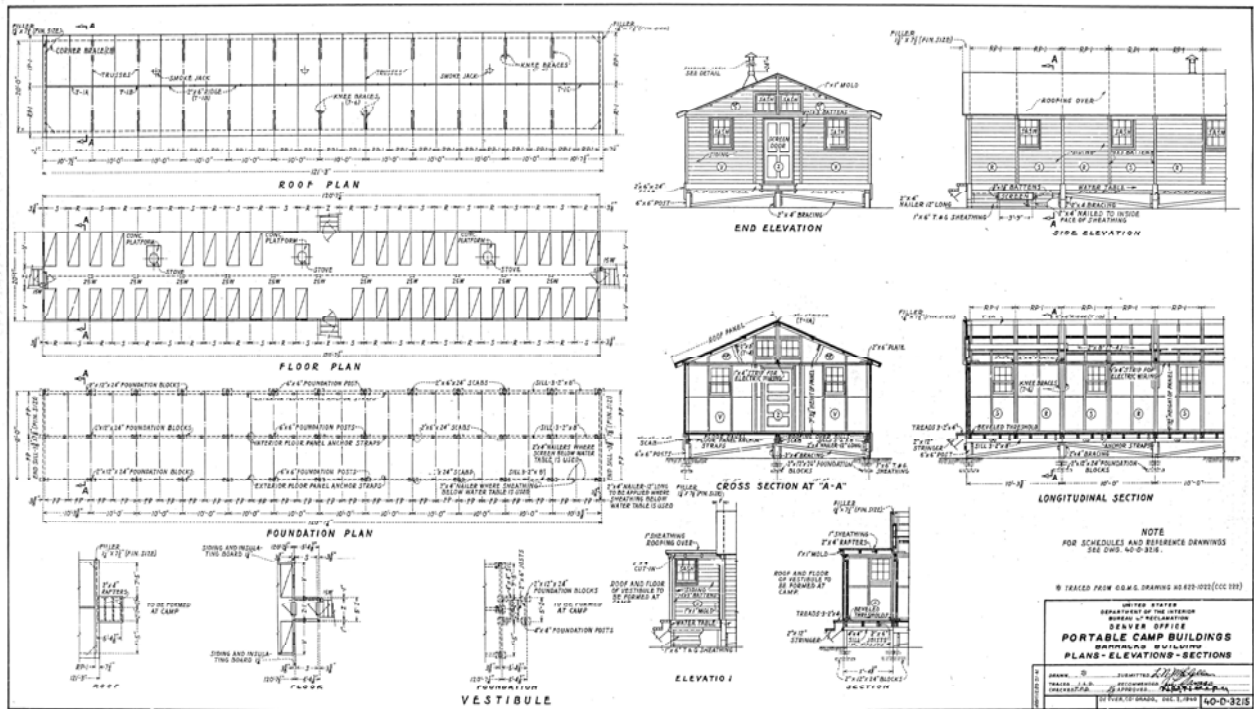
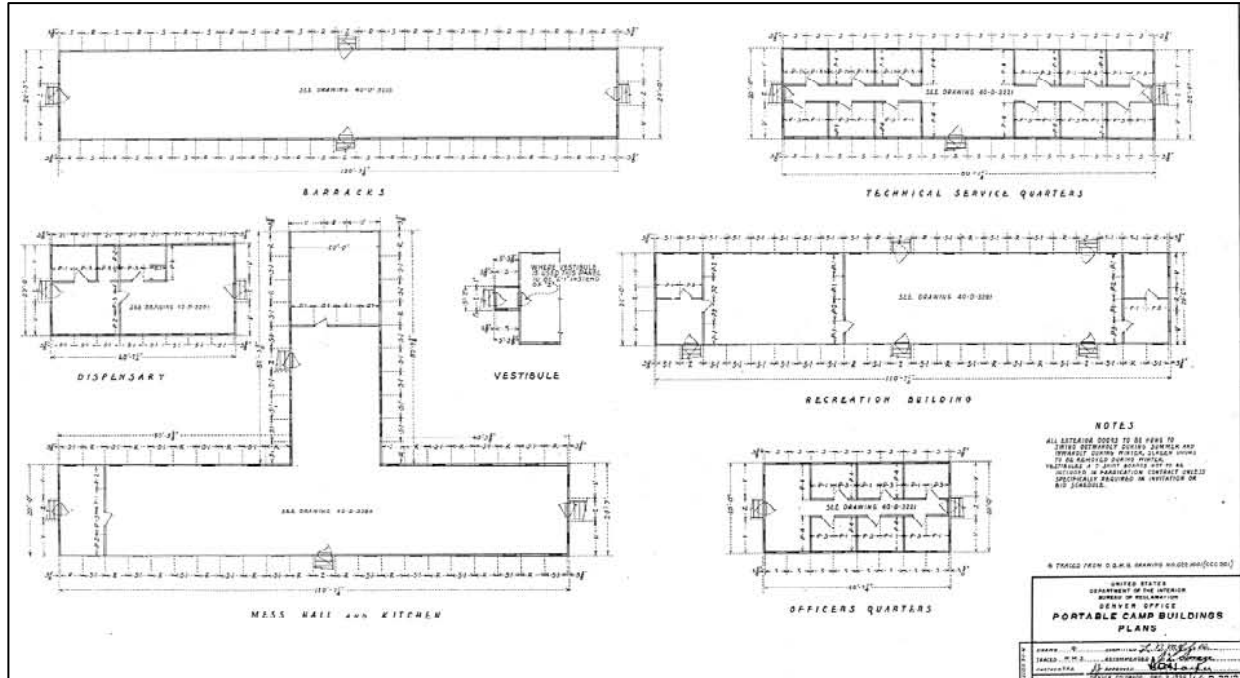


Figure 1.2 Plans for CCC portable camp buildings produced in Reclamation's Denver office for Water Conservation and Utilization Projects, December 2, 1940.

While the standard camp layout could be modified to adapt to site-specific conditions, the CCC prescribed the number, types, and dimensions of buildings allowed. Despite the strict requirements, the CCC found that, on occasion, participating entities increased the number of camp buildings without obtaining permission, or they constructed rigid type rather than portable buildings after 1936. In early 1939, Reclamation informed the CCC that the number of buildings in the standard plan were insufficient.<sup>16</sup> The Bureau cited its need for more than the two allowed garages, and for increased storehouse space and a repair shop for CCC equipment. In response to these suggestions and others solicited from the technical service entities, the CCC developed revised Standard Plan No. 1. Upon issuing the new plan in October 1939, the CCC reminded agencies that they had no authority to deviate from the number or design of the prescribed buildings. Some infractions must have continued to occur, for on March 13, 1941, a memo issued by the CCC Liaison Officer of the Ninth Corps admonished:

The standard plans are presumed to provide adequately for the normal requirements of any camp and there is no authority to supplement or modify the standards. In unusual cases the Director of CCC may grant authority for changes or additions, but unless specifically approved by the Director neither the Army nor the Technical Services have authority to make changes.<sup>17</sup>

In keeping with the basic nature of the buildings and their military origins, comforts were minimal. Enrollees slept on Army beds in open, one-room barracks, ate at the communal mess hall, and shared bath and latrine facilities. Nonetheless, the simple conditions represented a vast improvement for many of the young men coming from poverty-stricken households. Enrollees enjoyed running water, electricity, and heat. They could also count on plenty of nourishing food, ample clothing, medical treatment, and a wholesome lifestyle (see figures 1.3 through 1.5).

With the CCC program off to a successful beginning, President Roosevelt extended it for another 6 months on August 19, 1933. The second enrollment period ran from October 1, 1933, to March 31, 1934.<sup>18</sup> By the end of the first year, much had been accomplished by the inexperienced youths. They had constructed 25,000 miles of truck trails, 15,000 miles of telephone lines, and 420,000 check dams. On forest lands, enrollees had planted 98 million seedlings, conducted disease and insect control on 3 million acres, and dedicated 687,000 man-days to firefighting. As the condition of natural resources improved, so too did that of the enrollees. They became healthier, gained weight, and learned valuable new skills.



Figure 1.3 Barracks interior, Camp Meridian (BR-73), Boise Project, Idaho, 1940.



Figure 1.4 Kitchen staff and tables set for next meal, Camp BR-42 or BR-43, Owyhee Project, Oregon, November 1935.

Based on the achievements of the first year, the CCC program was expanded over the next one. Under the full impact of the Dust Bowl in mid-1934, the President envisioned a greater role for the CCC in counteracting the devastation caused by the drought. Roosevelt asked Congress for an additional \$50 million in funds to employ young men, principally on soil erosion prevention and irrigation projects. With approval from Congress, the program was enlarged; by July 1, 1934, the CCC could count 353,000 enrollees among its ranks, including Native Americans and veterans. The number of camps had reached 1,625.<sup>19</sup> Accomplishments of the CCC in the drought-ridden areas of the country further enhanced public support for the program.



Figure 1.5 Enrollees airing cots and wearing apparel on camp lawn, Camp Meridian (BR-73), Boise Project, Idaho, December 2, 1939.

With the impending expiration of the CCC enabling legislation on April 1, 1935, Roosevelt asked Congress to extend the program and to allow for yet further expansion as part of his public works initiatives. On April 8, 1935, Congress responded by passing the Emergency Relief Appropriation Act, which prolonged the CCC program until March 31, 1937. Two days after passage of the Act, Roosevelt announced that enrollment would be increased to 600,000 workers, nearly doubling the size of the program. To meet these goals, the maximum age limit was increased to 28 and the minimum lowered to 17. CCC enrollment peaked in the summer of 1935 with 505,782 men scattered across the country in 2,652 camps.<sup>20</sup>

Roosevelt's plans to enlarge the CCC were only temporary. With 1936 an election year, he intended to reduce the number of participants in hopes of reining in Government spending and presenting a more balanced Federal budget. The President wanted a cutback to 450,000 enrollees by June 1, 1936, and a corresponding closure of about 950 camps. He also hoped to create a permanent CCC agency at the reduced size.<sup>21</sup> Roosevelt's plans were thwarted by the very success of the program and by support from his own party members for its continuation at the increased levels. On March 14, 1936, two Tennessee Democrats, Speaker of the House Joseph Byrns and Representative Samuel McReynolds, presented a petition to Roosevelt with the signatures of 233 House members requesting that he discontinue the proposed massive closure of the camps. Under intense pressure, Roosevelt revised his plans and told Fechner that all existing camps were to be maintained and closed only when work projects were completed.<sup>22</sup>



In his annual budget message to Congress on January 5, 1937, Roosevelt praised the achievements of the CCC and asked for legislation creating a permanent agency. Six months later, on June 28, Congress authorized the formal establishment of the CCC as an independent agency but did not make it permanent. Among its provisions, the bill extended the program for 3 years, limited the maximum enrolled strength to 300,000 plus 10,000 Native Americans, and required that enrollees receive 10 hours a week of general education or vocational training. Even though Roosevelt did not gain all that he hoped for, he signed the bill and appointed Fechner as the director of the CCC.<sup>23</sup>

By the end of its fifth year, the CCC had firmly established itself as a resounding success. Even though it had not completely escaped criticism along the way, the CCC had garnered enormous public support. The agency had provided jobs and training for more than 2 million people, including young men, war veterans, Native Americans, reserve officers of the Army, and men and women associated with the administration of the program. A majority of enrollees came from rural areas. An aggregate of more than 3,500 camps were operated during this time period. The impressive amount of work accomplished fell under the general headings of forest protection and conservation, soil conservation, recreational development, grazing and wildlife assistance, flood control, irrigation and drainage improvements, and emergency rescue activities. In a House hearing on January 13, 1939, regarding additional appropriations that fiscal year for work relief programs, Congressman Walter Pierce of Oregon summarized the contributions of the CCC as follows: "Of all the different forms of relief, nothing appeals to me as being as valuable as the C.C.C. . . In the years to come, it (CCC) may be considered the outstanding social achievement of this administration."<sup>24</sup>

The number of CCC camps declined in 1938 as the reduction to 300,000 enrollees occurred in accordance with the June 28, 1937, legislation. By April 1939, 1,500 camps remained in operation. In 1939, another unsuccessful attempt was made to establish the CCC as a permanent agency. That same year, Roosevelt consolidated Federal relief programs into three agencies: the Federal Security Agency, the Federal Works Agency, and the Federal Loans Agency. On July 1, 1939, the CCC lost its status as an independent organization when it was placed within the Federal Security Agency. On December 31, 1939, Robert Fechner died without seeing his hope of a permanent CCC agency fulfilled. He was succeeded by James L. McEntee, the executive assistant director of the CCC.

McEntee had to deal with numerous problems confronting the program: desertions, low morale of the enrollees, cutbacks in funding and personnel, and difficulties in recruiting high quality candidates. By then, the unemployment crisis was easing, and many capable men found jobs elsewhere, no longer enticed by the \$30 monthly allowance. In spite of these problems, the CCC remained

extremely popular among the American public and politicians. At a hearing on March 21, 1940, for the 1941 Labor-Federal Security Appropriation Bill, Representative Clyde Ellis from Arkansas stated:

I think that in all of the 7 years of the New Deal nothing has been thought out and inaugurated that has more completely met the overwhelming approval of the American people than the C.C.C. Its benefits are both direct and indirect; its benefits are both immediate and remote; its benefits no doubt will be felt even in the next half of this century.<sup>25</sup>

At the time, there were 485 camps under the direction of Interior and 1,015 camps under the direction of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. In his fiscal year 1941 budget message, Roosevelt requested that Congress reduce the number of enrollees to 230,000 and camps to 1,227. Responding to public protests, Congress provided enough funding to prevent these cutbacks.<sup>26</sup>

The decisive turning point in the CCC's future was fueled by world events, namely, the outbreak of World War II. Heated debates in Congress and the media focused on the role of the CCC in view of the escalating hostilities. Although there was general agreement that the emphasis should shift toward national defense, some favored formal military training of the enrollees. Strongly opposed to this, McEntee and those supporting his position developed a plan to modify CCC training programs to better meet defense needs. In July 1940, McEntee explained the new CCC role as follows:

For the present the corps' contribution will come largely through the training of young men in the maintenance and operation of automotive and mechanized equipment, in auto mechanics at central repair shops, in radio communications, and in other civilian activities useful in national defense. Through this program . . . the corps can provide thousands of men each year to aid industry and the Nation in the advancement of the national-defense program.<sup>27</sup>

The following February, as the CCC made plans for its annual "open house" celebrations at camps throughout the country, McEntee instructed participating agencies to highlight activities that contributed most to the national defense program. He wrote: "It should be emphasized that the entire pattern of camp life—the daily routine, the training and educational programs, the work projects—all contribute to national security by developing in youth character, discipline, good work habits, health, love of country and the ability to achieve economic independence."<sup>28</sup>

Despite efforts to modify the CCC to adapt to changing times, the program faced extinction. The reserve military officers in charge of the CCC camps were gradually withdrawn and placed on active military duty. As young men left the CCC for higher paying jobs, it became harder to recruit replacements. A further

reduction in the number of camps from 1,500 to 1,100 was initiated on April 1, 1941. Military training received a higher priority at the camps and reduced the number of hours devoted to project work.

The entry of the United States into World War II following the attack on Pearl Harbor hastened the demise of the CCC. As 1941 drew to a close and the CCC faced an uncertain future, President Roosevelt distributed a gracious holiday greeting to the CCC, acknowledging their valuable contributions to the country's defense preparations (see figure 1.6). The following month, McEntee sent a letter to all of the CCC advisory council representatives informing them of the immediate reorganization of the CCC on a war basis. He directed the termination of all CCC camps as quickly as possible unless they were involved in war-related construction activities or in the protection of war-related natural resources.<sup>29</sup> Although Roosevelt urged continuation of the CCC as a means of accomplishing critical defense work, Congress sealed the fate of the program on June 30, 1942, when it voted to liquidate the CCC and set aside \$8 million to help cover the costs.<sup>30</sup>

Immediately thereafter, the CCC took steps to release the remaining 60,000 enrollees and discontinue all work programs. Even though only 350 camps still operated, the CCC had in its possession 1,367 closed camps, each consisting of from 20 to 24 buildings and massive amounts of equipment requiring disposition. The Army, Navy, and Civil Aeronautics Administration had first priority to CCC property, and they used much of it in the war effort. A considerable number of the closed camps were converted to military training schools or housing by the U.S. Department of War.<sup>31</sup>

By June 30, 1943, the CCC program was completely shut down, although not all property had been liquidated. Massive unemployment no longer plagued the Nation, and attention had shifted to winning the war. The powerful legacy of the CCC has lived on however; it remains one of the most touted programs of Roosevelt's New Deal. More than 2.5 million young men experienced the CCC in 4,500 camps that existed at some point in the program's 9-year lifespan.<sup>32</sup> Many accomplishments of the youths engaged in the CCC survive today and display a remarkably high quality of execution and durability.

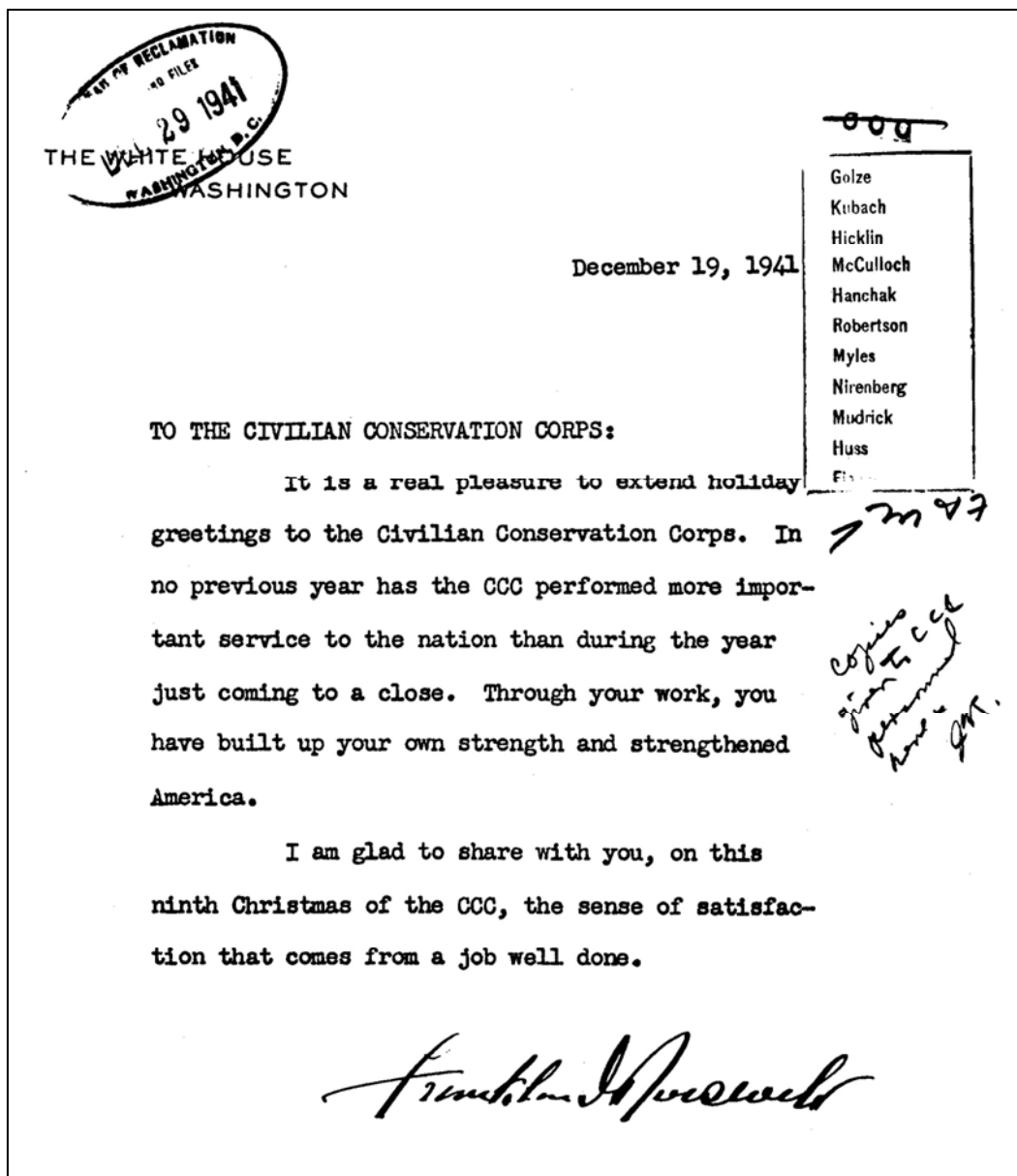


Figure 1.6 Holiday letter from President Roosevelt to the Civilian Conservation Corps.

## Endnotes for Chapter 1

<sup>1</sup> The numerous sources used for chapter 1 include three publications containing excellent information on the CCC program. They are: John A. Salmond, *The Civilian Conservation Corps, 1933-1942* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1967); Department of Agriculture, U.S. Forest Service, *The Forest Service and the Civilian Conservation Corps: 1933-42*, by Alison Otis, et al. (August 1986); Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *The Civilian Conservation Corps and the National Park Service, 1933-42: An Administrative History*, by John Paige (1985).

<sup>2</sup> Robert Fechner, "Objectives and Results of the Civilian Conservation Corps Program," 1938, File 035, Box 35, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

<sup>3</sup> "Accomplishments of the CCC-Need for Its Continuance," radio address by Col. Robert Fechner printed in the *Congressional Record, Appendix*, 76<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> Session (April 4, 1939), 1306-1308.

<sup>4</sup> The ECW officially expired on June 30, 1937, and, by an Act of Congress, approved and signed by the President on June 28, 1937 (Public Law 75-163), the Civilian Conservation Corps was established as an independent, although not permanent, agency on July 1, 1937.

<sup>5</sup> Robert Parham, "The Civilian Conservation Corps in Colorado, 1933-1942" (master's thesis, University of Colorado, 1981); Fred Leake and Ray Carter, "Roosevelt's Tree Army: A Brief History of the Civilian Conservation Corps," from the pamphlet by the National Association of CCC Alumni, see <<http://www.geocities.com/ccchistory/treearmy.html>>.

<sup>6</sup> The term "Interior" refers to the U.S. Department of the Interior and will be used henceforth.

<sup>7</sup> See <<http://www.fs.fed.us/gpnf/research/heritage/LookingBackTheCivilianConservationCorpsandTheNationalForests.htm>>. The Seventh Corps Area included Kansas, Arkansas, Iowa, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, and Missouri. The Eighth Corps Area included Texas, Oklahoma, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, and Wyoming. The Ninth Corps Area included Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Utah, Nevada, California, and Yellowstone Park.

<sup>8</sup> Frederic Haskin, "Praises Record of C.C.C. Camp," *The Sunday Washington Star* (August 11, 1940).

<sup>9</sup> Joseph Speakman, "Into the Woods: The First Year of the Civilian Conservation Corps," *Prologue* 38 (Fall 2006). See <<http://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2006/fall/ccc.html>>.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid; also see <<http://www.fs.fed.us/gpnf/research/heritage/LookingBackTheCivilianConservationCorpsandTheNationalForests.htm>>.

<sup>11</sup> Of three amendments to the bill signed by Roosevelt on March 31, 1933, one was submitted by Representative Oscar De Priest, Republican of Illinois, and the only Black Congressman. It prohibited discrimination on account of race, color, or creed. See Salmond, 23.

<sup>12</sup> Initially, some CCC camps were integrated, but they were disbanded in 1935, due to local complaints and the views of the U.S. Army and CCC administrators. In July 1935, Robert Fechner issued a directive ordering the "complete segregation of colored and white enrollees." The CCC maintained that segregation was not discrimination. See <<http://newdeal.feri.org/aacc/index.htm>>.

<sup>13</sup> Fechner, "Objectives and Results of the Civilian Conservation Corps Program," 7.

<sup>14</sup> Paige, 71; Otis, 9.

<sup>15</sup> Otis, 74-78.

<sup>16</sup> Letter from Chief Engineer R.F. Walter to J.C. Roak, Liaison Officer, 8<sup>th</sup> Corps Areas, dated February 13, 1939, Box 71, Entry 22, RG 116, National Archives, Denver.

<sup>17</sup> Memo from K. Wolfe, Liaison Officer, CCC, Ninth Corps Area, to Technical Services, March 13, 1941, Box 1, Entry 1, RG 49, National Archives, Denver.

<sup>18</sup> Although the CCC was authorized to continue for 2 years, the results of the first 3 months were used to determine if the program was effective and should be maintained. Following the initial enrollment, the CCC program was set up on 6-month periods. The first period extended from June 1, 1933, to September 30, 1933; the second from October 1, 1933 to March 31, 1934; the third from April 1, 1934, to September 30, 1934, etc. At first, enlistment was limited to one six-month period, but this was eventually increased to a maximum of 2 years.

<sup>19</sup> Salmond, 55-56.

<sup>20</sup> Robert Fechner, "Objectives and Results of the Civilian Conservation Corps Program," 11.

<sup>21</sup> Salmond, 63.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, 66-67.

<sup>23</sup> Paige, 24.

<sup>24</sup> *Congressional Record*, 76th Congress, 1st Session, House (January 13, 1939), 291.

<sup>25</sup> *Congressional Record*, 76th Congress, 3rd Session, House (March 21, 1940), 3237.

<sup>26</sup> Paige, 28-29.

<sup>27</sup> "The C.C.C. and National Defense," article by James J. McEntee reprinted in *Congressional Record*, Appendix, 76th Congress, 3rd Session, Senate (August 13, 1940), 15729.

<sup>28</sup> Memo from Reclamation Commissioner to all CCC Field Offices, February 24, 1941, Box 1, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

<sup>29</sup> Letter from James McEntee to U.S. Department of the Interior Representative, January 27, 1942, Box 44, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

<sup>30</sup> Federal Security Agency, "Annual Report of the Director of the Civilian Conservation Corps, Fiscal Year Ended June 30 1942," p. 1, Box 47, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>32</sup> Judith Austin, "The CCC in Idaho," *Idaho Yesterdays*, Vol. 27, No. 3 (1983), 13.

## Chapter 2

# The Bureau of Reclamation's CCC Program

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As the Federal agency responsible for designing and building large-scale irrigation projects in the arid and semi-arid West, Reclamation was vitally involved in the allocation and use of two natural resources: water and soils. Beginning in 1902, the Federal Government invested heavily in the construction of dams and water conveyance facilities to provide farmers with the essential water to grow crops. Water users who benefited from Reclamation irrigation works were required to repay their construction costs over a period of years. Fees paid by the water users also supported the operation and maintenance of facilities.

By the mid-1930s, Reclamation had constructed a network of some 50 projects, both small and large, across the West. Despite Reclamation's extensive activities and promises to "make the desert bloom," in reality, the results had fallen far below expectations. Almost half of the projects had been approved during the early heyday years up to 1909. Thereafter, the number of new projects authorized slowed down considerably as criticism mounted against Reclamation. Construction costs invariably exceeded estimates, settlers from the more humid eastern United States struggled with unfamiliar irrigation practices, and poor soils or drainage plagued some project lands. For Reclamation farmers, making a living off marginal lands proved a great deal more difficult than touted by the Government. The World War I years offered a reprieve to growers across the West as prices boomed in response to increased demand for food from Europe; however, by 1919, prices had dropped sharply, and the farm depression continued into the 1920s.

Reclamation continued to face severe criticism, from both the public and private sectors, for undertaking too many projects while severely undercalculating their costs and ignoring problems of inferior soil and drainage. Project settlers complained incessantly about the burden of construction repayment schedules and operation and maintenance costs. By 1922, Reclamation reported a 40-percent delinquency rate on repayment fees.<sup>1</sup> Reclamation's fortunes began to change favorably with the appointment of Commissioner Elwood Mead in 1924. He set

about tackling many of the operational and financial problems that plagued Reclamation and, in his 12-year tenure as Commissioner, successfully established a new course for the Bureau.

The fortunes of western farmers, both on and off Reclamation projects, fluctuated in the late 1920s. On the Southern Plains, unaware of the disastrous consequences, dryland farmers reaped bonanza wheat yields on millions of acres of native grassland they converted to deeply plowed fields. On the Northern Plains, farmers suffered due to the compounded effects of poor agricultural methods and a few dry years and bitter winters. In the Northwest, even though crop yields on irrigated lands climbed for fruits and numerous vegetables, prices did not keep up with increased production costs.<sup>2</sup>

Despite the uncertainties of farming and the economy, no one could imagine the dark years just ahead. The combined impact of the stock market crash, drought, and unsustainable cultivation practices exacted a terrible toll on western farmers, especially on the Great Plains, during the Depression. Crop prices tumbled, water supplies dwindled, and valuable topsoil swept off of plowed fields in blinding duststorms.

On Reclamation projects, water users burdened by financial hardship were unable to adequately maintain, much less upgrade, irrigation systems. Many aging water control structures had deteriorated beyond repair, canals were silted and clogged with vegetation, weeds and gophers infested canal banks, and crop yields dropped drastically with the decrease in water supplies. By 1934, it had become critical for the Federal Government to address the plight of western farmers and to safeguard its hefty investment in irrigation projects. The CCC program provided a perfect mechanism for doing both while meeting its objectives of protecting natural resources and aiding the unemployed.

The first allocation of CCC camps to Reclamation occurred in mid-1934 following Roosevelt's successful expansion of the program to combat the devastating effects of the Dust Bowl. Prior to that, the technical engineering nature of Reclamation's work raised questions about the applicability of the CCC program to Bureau activities. A study of the different types of work available on Reclamation projects demonstrated that, indeed, CCC enrollees could provide a wide range of valuable assistance under the supervision of technical staff.<sup>3</sup> During the third enrollment period, which extended from April 1, 1934, to September 30, 1934, Reclamation received approval for nine camps.

In May 1934, the first Reclamation CCC camp opened at Lake Guernsey, a reservoir on the North Platte Project, in Wyoming. Designated originally as RS-1 (Reclamation Service No. 1), the camp became known as Camp BR-9 (Bureau of Reclamation No. 9) and was created under a cooperative agreement with the National Park Service (NPS). In July 1934, a second camp, BR-10, was



established at Lake Guernsey. In early September 1934, Camp BR-8 was established at Elephant Butte Reservoir on the Rio Grande Project in New Mexico, also on a cooperative basis with the NPS. The following September, Camp BR-54 opened at the same reservoir.

In July 1934, the CCC allotted six drought-relief camps to Reclamation. These were essentially the same as regular CCC camps but were restricted to States suffering severely from drought, financed from drought relief funds, and authorized for a full year, rather than the typical 6-month periods.<sup>4</sup> Assigned numbers beginning with DBR (Drought Relief Bureau of Reclamation), the six camps included Camp DBR-1 at Lake Minatare, Nebraska, on the North Platte Project; Camp DBR-2 at Fruitdale, South Dakota, on the Belle Fourche Project; Camp DBR-3 at Carlsbad, New Mexico, on the Carlsbad Project; Camp DBR-4 at Ysleta, Texas, on the Rio Grande Project; Camp DBR-5 at Heber, Utah, on the Strawberry Valley Project; and Camp DBR-6 at Ephraim, Utah, on the Sanpete Project. The work completed on Reclamation irrigation projects by the drought relief camps proved of tremendous value in combating the acute water shortages plaguing farmers.

From one initial camp on the North Platte Project, the number of camps assigned to Reclamation grew to a peak of 45 during the fifth enrollment period (April 1 to October 1, 1935) at the height of the CCC program. By October 1, 1935, the Army had completed construction of almost all of those camps, although 17 awaited occupation.<sup>5</sup> From then until May 1941, the number of active Reclamation camps fluctuated between 34 and 44 (see figure 2.1).

Thereafter, camps were closed in response to the national defense needs. By June 30, 1942, only seven camps remained on Reclamation projects, and they were all discontinued shortly thereafter. Over the life of the CCC program, camps existed at 83 separate locations on 45 Reclamation projects in 15 western States.<sup>6</sup> A number of camps proposed or approved for Reclamation projects never materialized for one reason or other. This explains the break in the consecutive numbering system of actual Reclamation camps.<sup>7</sup>

In association with Reclamation's CCC camps, temporary side camps were sometimes established at remote job sites far from camp (see appendix E). Side camps, also known as spike camps, were usually smaller than regular ones and normally consisted of tents. Examples of side camps on Reclamation CCC projects include the one at Alamogordo Dam, New Mexico, (BR-3, main camp), where enrollees constructed improvements for recreational use of the reservoir; at the river portal to the Gunnison Tunnel, Colorado, (BR-23, main camp), where enrollees rebuilt the treacherous old road leading from the top of the canyon down to the portal; and at Clear Lake, Oregon, (BR-41, main camp), where enrollees raised the height of Clear Lake Dam by 3 feet (see figure 2.2).



Figure 2.1 Reclamation CCC camps, April 1941. Note: An abandoned CCC camp located in Quartz Mountain State Park area in Altus, Oklahoma, was rehabilitated and put into operation in May 1941, for use of Works Progress Administration employees working on Reclamation's Altus Project. The Works Progress Administration camp closed on March 28, 1942.

Some CCC camps established on Reclamation projects operated seasonally for climatic reasons. Camps at high elevations, such as Camp BR-5 on the Strawberry Valley Project or Camp BR-50 on the Yakima Project, were occupied only in the summer; enrollees relocated to lower elevation camps in the winter to escape heavy snows and severe weather. Conversely, camps located in hot desert environments, such as the Arizona camps in Yuma (Camps BR-13 and Camp BR-74) and Phoenix (Camps BR-14 and BR-19), sometimes operated only in winter months.

Most camps had frame buildings of the permanent type or, later on, of the portable variety. At summer-only camps, enrollees lived in tents, while the mess

halls, bathhouses, and officers' quarters tended to be of frame construction. Upon termination of a camp, Reclamation filed a disposal report with the CCC regional U.S. Army Corps area office, identifying the type and size of all camp buildings and associated fixtures, and requesting clearance of them. Oftentimes, Reclamation expressed interest in dismantling and reusing one or more abandoned CCC buildings at another one of its camps. On other occasions, Reclamation requested permanent retention of buildings, or entire camps, for use in the ongoing operation and maintenance of irrigation projects. If Reclamation had no need for the buildings for its own CCC purposes or regular operations, it recommended that the Army approve reuse by the CCC elsewhere. Since a significant cost associated with camps existed in the labor involved in constructing them, the CCC director's office always encouraged reuse rather than salvage, especially for buildings of permanent construction. In the case of portable buildings, the CCC urged that they be dismantled for re-erection elsewhere.<sup>8</sup> Sometimes, local irrigation districts or other entities expressed interest in obtaining buildings.



Figure 2.2 Sleeping quarters for enrollees at Clear Lake spike camp, Camp BR-41, Klamath Project, Oregon, May 15, 1939.

## Administration of CCC Program Within Reclamation

The departmental representative on the CCC advisory council was responsible for overall coordination and supervision of CCC programs assigned to Interior agencies. Initially, Horace Albright, director of the NPS, held this position. When he resigned as NPS director on August 10, 1933, Arno Cammerer, the new

director, succeeded him as the departmental representative. With the formal establishment of the CCC on June 28, 1937, Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes replaced Cammerer with Conrad Wirth as the representative on the advisory council. Wirth, who served as chief planner of the NPS, remained the representative through the duration of the CCC program.

As one of the technical agencies participating in the CCC program, Reclamation had responsibility for formulating and directing the project work carried out at the various camps assigned to it. Under the authority of Reclamation Commissioner John C. Page, Alfred R. Golze in the Washington, DC, office served as supervising engineer of the CCC program for most of its existence.<sup>9</sup> As such, Golze had general charge of all Reclamation CCC activities and forces. Even though technically the CCC program was administered from Reclamation headquarters in Washington, DC, initially that office served mainly as an intermediary transmittal office, providing the essential contact between the CCC director's office and the Secretary of the Interior's office. In reality, the chief engineer's office in Denver exercised much of the detail and project design control. To ensure adequate engineering supervision, Reclamation created CCC regional directors who were the superintendents or construction engineers of the various Reclamation projects participating in the CCC program. They had responsibility for all work activities of CCC camps associated with Reclamation projects under their charge (see figure 2.3). In addition, they were charged with ensuring that CCC work was performed in accordance with CCC regulations, or in their absence, with Reclamation or Interior regulations. The actual day-to-day project work at the camps fell under the direction of Reclamation's technical staff. Construction and technical foremen supervised, inspected, and approved construction of irrigation-related features. Selected enrollees designated as project assistants, leaders, and assistant leaders acted as subforemen under the supervision of the foreman.<sup>10</sup>

The sometimes overlapping division of authority between Washington, DC, and Denver remained unchanged until June 1939. At that time, Reclamation was the only Interior bureau that had not centralized control of CCC administrative matters in Washington. Although Commissioner Page preferred not to do so, he apparently felt it was necessary, given the structure favored by other agencies and an order issued by Fechner, to reduce the number of supervisory personnel by more than 20 percent. On June 29, 1939, Page released circular letter No. 199 announcing that major control of the program would be transferred to a CCC division in Washington. In a confidential letter to Chief Engineer R.F. Walter in Denver a few days earlier, Page wrote, "I do this. . . with an inherent prejudice against concentration of more work in Washington, and it is only because there seems to be no other alternative that this conclusion is reached."<sup>11</sup> The transfer of control created operational inefficiencies and, in late 1940, consideration was given to shifting it back to Denver. This matter was still under discussion just prior to the drastic reduction in the CCC program following the U.S. entry in World War II.<sup>12</sup> Apparently, no action occurred thereafter.





Figure 2.3 Organization chart for Reclamation's CCC Eighth Corps Area, August 27, 1938.

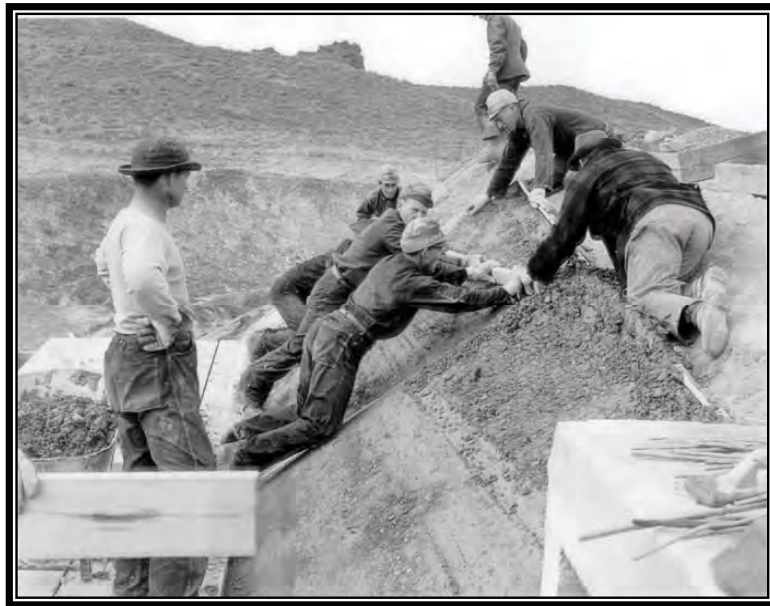
In administering its CCC program at the camp level, Reclamation had to cooperate extensively with the Army. A review of Reclamation camp reports reveals that, in general, the two entities worked well together. One report summarized the coordination as follows: "In operating the camp (DBR-5) the supervisory personnel of the Army and Reclamation cooperate to the fullest extent for the benefit of the government, the work project, and the enrollees."<sup>13</sup>

## The Nature of Reclamation CCC Project Work

Except in emergencies, CCC enrollees spent 5 days a week, 8 hours a day, performing work to improve Reclamation facilities. As the Bureau's CCC program expanded from its small beginnings in 1934, the project work undertaken by enrollees also grew more varied. Originally assigned to rehabilitate the storage, distribution, and drainage systems of older projects that had been seriously affected by the combination of drought and depressed farm prices, the camps broadened their activities to include developing supplemental water supplies and constructing new irrigation projects. Much of the work accomplished was of a seemingly mundane and unspectacular nature, but it had far-reaching benefits.

The rehabilitation of older project facilities consisted of returning weed- and silt-filled canals and laterals to a proper cross-section, replacing decaying wood structures with concrete ones, adding new water control structures, building bridges over canals, eradicating weeds and rodents, reconditioning operating roads, placing riprap on canal and lateral banks, and sealing porous canals with earth or concrete linings (see figure 2.4).

Figure 2.4  
Screeding concrete  
on slope at New  
Kingman Check,  
Camp BR-42, Boise  
Project, Idaho,  
February 26, 1940.



The acute water deficiencies experienced during the Depression revealed that a few of the project storage facilities, though adequate under ordinary conditions, were insufficient during drought periods. To remedy this situation, Reclamation used CCC forces to build supplemental storage facilities. Examples are Midview Dam and Dike on the Moon Lake Project in Utah (Camp BR-11) and Anita Dam on the Huntley Project in Montana (Camp BR-57). Another labor-intensive task assigned to enrollees at various camps consisted of clearing reservoir areas of timber and debris in preparation for new dam construction. The physically demanding work involved felling trees, then piling and burning them. Heavy equipment, such as tractors and bulldozers, augmented hand labor and provided the enrollees an opportunity to learn new skills. The most prominent reservoir-clearing operation occurred at the Shasta Dam site on the Central Valley Project in California. Enrollees of Camps BR-84 and 85 removed trees and shrubs from 2,597 acres during the camps' existence. Similar work took place at Wickiup Reservoir on the Deschutes Project, Oregon (Camps BR-75, BR-76, and BR-77); Deer Creek Reservoir on the Provo River Project, Utah (Camp BR-91); Pine View Reservoir on the Ogden River Project, Utah (Camp BR-12); Island Park Reservoir on the Upper Snake River Project, Idaho (Camp BR-28); and Parker Dam Reservoir on the Parker Dam Project, Arizona, (Camps BR-17 and BR-18).

Another effort to increase water supplies involved building new feeder canals to transport additional water to existing reservoirs. Examples include the Duchesne Feeder Canal on the Moon Lake Project (Camp BR-11) and the Strawberry Reservoir Feeder Canal on the Strawberry Valley Project (Camp BR-5). Enrollees cleared the canal right-of-ways, excavated the trenches, trimmed the canal slopes, and, in some cases, placed concrete linings. The CCC also completed improvements to numerous existing storage facilities such as Belle Fourche Dam on the Belle Fourche Project (Camp BR-2), Clear Lake Dam on the Klamath Project (Camp BR-41), and the South Diversion Dam on the Orland Project (Camp BR-78) (see figure 2.5).



Figure 2.5 Repairing Belle Fourche Dam, Camp Fruitdale (BR-2), Belle Fourche Project, South Dakota, 1940.

Flood control was another endeavor undertaken by the CCC. Many areas of the West under Reclamation projects experienced intense localized rainfalls of short duration that caused severe damage to irrigation systems. The CCC built a number of flood control structures, such as Apache and Box Canyon Dams on the Rio Grande Project (Camp BR-39).

Prior to the involvement of the CCC, little existed in the way of recreational improvements on Reclamation projects.<sup>14</sup> The availability of CCC labor provided the perfect opportunity to add parks, campgrounds, and picnic areas on suitable project lands adjacent to rivers, reservoirs, or lakes. Reclamation recognized the importance of recreational amenities at its remote facilities as a way to “permit the average settler or his family or the urban residents to enjoy a weekend or occasional day of rest without considerable travel,”<sup>15</sup> and incorporated such amenities in a number of its CCC projects.

Enrollees constructed an array of facilities designed for the public to enjoy. These included picnic shelters, tables, benches, stoves, fireplaces, water systems, latrines, sewage disposal plants, and landscaping. Swimming, boating, and fishing facilities, and hiking trails built by the CCC provided park visitors with

additional amenities. The improvements greatly increased public appreciation for the CCC and made Reclamation projects more accessible. The prime examples of recreational development occurred at Lake Guernsey on the North Platte Project (Camps BR-9 and BR-10), Elephant Butte Reservoir on the Rio Grande Project (Camps BR-8 and BR-54), Lake Minatare on the North Platte Project (Camp BR-1), and Lake Walcott on the Minidoka Project (Camp BR-27).

At Lake Guernsey, Camps BR-9 and BR-10 were responsible for transforming the shoreline into a showplace of recreational development. Enrollees crafted sturdy log and stone picnic shelters, trails, and a rustic style museum complete with interpretive displays. The outstanding quality and cohesiveness of the CCC work at Lake Guernsey resulted in the designation of Lake Guernsey State Park as a National Historic Landmark on September 25, 1997. At Camps BR-8 and BR-54, enrollees transformed the landscape at Elephant Butte Reservoir by building a variety of structures, terracing the hillsides, and planting hundreds of trees. The CCC contributions are a major feature of the Elephant Butte Historic District, listed in the National Register of Historic Places in February 1997.

The camp at Lake Minatare can be credited with construction of the most unique of all Reclamation CCC structures. In the unlikely state of Nebraska, on a point of land extending into the lake, enrollees built a 55-foot-high native rock structure resembling a lighthouse that contained a circular staircase. From the observation deck at the top, visitors could see Scotts Bluff and Chimney Rock, both landmarks of the Oregon Trail. The lookout tower still attracts sightseers today (see figure 2.6).

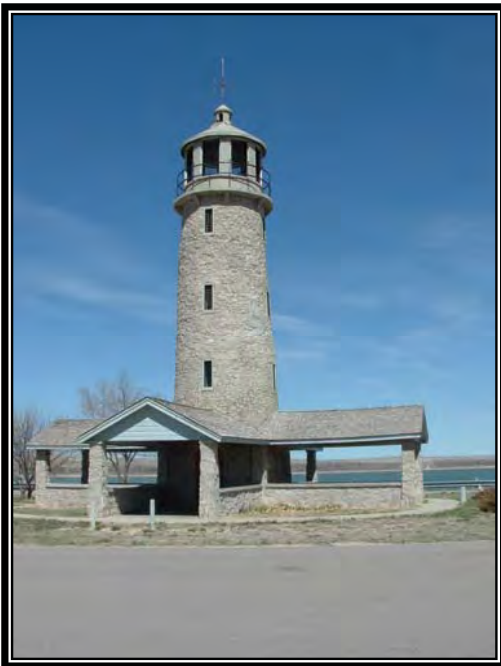


Figure 2.6 CCC lighthouse at Lake Minatare, Camp Minatare (BR-1), North Platte Project, Nebraska, 2008.

Auxiliary to these main classes of work, the CCC also enhanced or developed wildlife refuges at reservoirs, conducted rodent control operations and weed eradication experiments, and performed emergency work. In cooperation with the Bureau of Biological Survey (now the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service), Reclamation's CCC enrollees developed wildlife refuges at Deer Flat Reservoir in western Idaho (Camp BR-24), Tululake in northern California (Camp BR-20), Lake Walcott in southern Idaho (Camp BR-27), and at Pishkun Reservoir in Montana (Camp BR-33). At Elephant Butte Reservoir, CCC forces constructed a 14-pond fish hatchery (Camps BR-8 and BR-54).



The elimination of troublesome rodents along canal banks and in farm fields was an ongoing endeavor at many camps and was viewed as an “undertaking of major importance to many Reclamation projects.”<sup>16</sup> Rodents caused two types of serious damage: in canal banks, their burrowing resulted in canal collapses; and in fields, their activities resulted in substantial crop loss. The damage had serious consequences for water users. In cooperation with the Bureau of Biological Survey, the CCC targeted pocket gophers and ground squirrels and eradicated them, either by trapping or poisoning or both. The labor intensive work was well suited to the CCC program. Small crews performed the task as an adjunct to larger construction projects. By June 1941, enrollees had treated an astounding 2,510,100 acres for rodent control.

Weed eradication was another significant activity performed at many Reclamation CCC camps. The spread of noxious weeds, such as Canadian thistle, bindweed, and Johnson grass, on Reclamation projects threatened to displace native plants and make lands unproductive. Canals provided easy transportation routes for all sorts of seeds to disperse onto irrigated lands. Controlling and eradicating the invasive plants was no simple task. Enrollees did not conduct weed control on private property, but farmers were shown, by demonstration on Government tracts, the methods of attacking various kinds of noxious weeds. Sample demonstrations were also performed on the Government canals and laterals for the benefit of the operating personnel. The CCC performed experiments with different types of grasses that could crowd out weeds on canal banks and that might be useful as a pasture crop.<sup>17</sup> On the Belle Fourche Project (Camp BR-2), CCC enrollees showed farmers the use and methods of growing strawberry clover and brome grass as valuable pasture. The young men also carried out experiments on test plots to eradicate noxious weeds using blades and chemicals. On the Rio Grande Project (Camp BR-4), enrollees expended considerable effort on that objective. They tried a variety of methods to control bindweed including chopping plants out by hand, spraying them with oil, and then burning them.

The CCC also played an active role assisting in various types of emergency situations. In early June 1937, all enrollees at Carlsbad, New Mexico, (Camp BR-3) were assigned to emergency work at McMillan Dam brought about by extreme flood conditions of the Pecos River. A serious crack had developed in the dam, and water started pouring through the leak. For 6 days, CCC crews placed sandbags on the reservoir face of the dam to hold back water in the event of further leaks. Thanks to the efforts of CCC enrollees, the dam withstood the raging floodwaters and the city of Carlsbad escaped damage. When a small dam failed on June 13, 1937, near Austin, Colorado, and partially flooded the town, CCC forces from the camp in Montrose (Camp BR-23) helped to restore sanitation facilities and repair damaged irrigation ditches.

The CCC provided invaluable help during numerous emergencies resulting from hazardous winter weather. The snow season of 1936-37 was particularly severe in parts of Utah and Nevada, and the CCC youths effectively carried out

emergency work to save human lives and livestock. In January 1937, heavy snows marooned about 50,000 head of sheep in Pleasant Valley in the Uinta Basin of eastern Utah. A CCC tractor, with a bulldozer attachment, was lent to the Utah State Road Commission to clear a 26-mile road, which provided an escape route for the animals afterwards. CCC enrollees from Camp BR-11 on the Moon Lake Project accompanied the tractor to lend assistance. In early February 1937, as pounding snowstorms hit the mining and farming districts in western Nevada, CCC enrollees mobilized to aid those stranded by the blizzards. In cooperation with the county, they cleared 380 miles of road, dug out 10 towns and outlying ranchers and miners, and made possible the feeding of many isolated cattle herds.

Another type of emergency work conducted by CCC enrollees on Reclamation projects attracted little attention, although it prevented serious consequences. This work involved canal repairs that often were beyond the financial means of the affected water users. The most common emergencies consisted of canal breaks, usually resulting from the tunneling activities of rodents. Such breaks, if not repaired promptly, had the potential to cause significant damage by flooding some fields and drying up others. On the Klamath Project in California and Oregon (Camps BR-20 and BR-41), crews quickly repaired 10 breaks along canal banks that occurred in the spring of 1937. On the Salt River Project in Arizona (Camps BR-14 and BR-19), enrollees patched a serious 100-foot break in the South Canal that had formed in April 1937. Early in May 1937, CCC men from the Deaver Camp on the Shoshone Project (Camp BR-7) were called out to help reconstruct 300 feet of the inclined drop below the Ralston Reservoir.<sup>18</sup>

## **Job Training and Educational Opportunities in Reclamation CCC Camps**

In addition to supervising enrollees while they were engaged in project work, Reclamation also assumed responsibility for training them. Over the lifespan of the CCC, the Bureau dedicated an increasing amount of attention to the latter aspect of the program. Reclamation recognized that the valuable skills enrollees developed from performing activities, ranging from manual labor to highly technical work, would prepare them for earning a living later.

Since many of the young men arrived at camp with no work background, training was essential. Constructing canals, roads, dams, water control features, and recreational facilities afforded enrollees a perfect opportunity to gain practical experience. They received on-the-job training in the operation of equipment such as tractors, trucks, and draglines. They learned the fundamentals of mixing, finishing, and curing concrete; building forms; and adding reinforcements. They were taught about working with stone, both the quarrying and construction aspects; using burners and chemicals for weed control; and shaping lumber for timber structures. As a result, young men who entered the CCC with empty

pockets and no skills to offer became accomplished mechanics, carpenters, masons, lumbermen, and surveyors. Enrollees also acquired expertise in subjects associated with operating the camp, such as clerical work, cooking, or baking.<sup>19</sup>

Enrollees performed project work according to the same standards and specifications used by Reclamation engineers for non-CCC work. The engineering manuals most commonly referred to for CCC construction were the ones for concrete and the hydraulic and excavation tables.<sup>20</sup> Reclamation did produce a “Weed Manual” in 1941 specifically for use by CCC personnel in connection with weed control work. The CCC Office of Education in Washington was another source for all sorts of training materials. Camps received handbooks containing lists of available films and manuals. The latter ranged in subject matter from “Brick and Stone Work” to “Common Range Plants” to “Signs and Markers” to “Job Training is a Business Proposition.” All camps had libraries supplied with textbooks, reference works, and a selection of daily newspapers (see figure 2.7). Books useful for on-the-job training, as well as for advancing personal skills, were available. Titles ran the gamut from “Accountancy as a Career” to “Electricity in the Home and on the Farm” to “Elements of Forestry” to “Amateur Machinist.”



Figure 2.7 Reading area, educational building, Camp Meridian (BR-73), Boise Project, Idaho, 1940.

Reportedly, upon leaving Reclamation CCC camps, enrollees secured a range of jobs.<sup>21</sup> These included farmer, farm hand, ranch hand, miner, railroad worker, skilled labor helper, lumberjack, highway worker, factory worker, and painter, among others. Records showed that the young men leaving the CCC to accept jobs usually returned to their home State or region. Easterners assigned to western camps nearly all moved back East, while enrollees from the West preferred to stay there.

In 1939, Reclamation conducted a study of the relationship between the work performed by enrollees in camp and the type of employment they accepted upon

leaving. Of the enrollee records examined, two-thirds accepted work in four primary fields: 20 percent went on to farms, 16 percent became store clerks and attendants, 15 percent were hired as unskilled workers, and 14 percent became truck drivers. The large group of enrollees who found employment on farms was tied to the fact that between 1937 and 1939, the majority of youths assigned to Reclamation camps came from farming areas in the mid- or far West. Among the remaining one-third of enrollees, some found jobs in the Federal Government, while others became auto mechanics, carpenter helpers, miners, tractor operators, lumbermen, and painters' assistants.<sup>22</sup>

The successful employment of enrollees was attributed, in large part, to the experience and training gained while in the CCC camps. Men who stayed at least 1 year or longer in the CCC ended up with higher paying jobs than those who served for just 6 months. Positions obtained by former CCC enrollees ranged in salary from \$40 per month to as high as \$135 per month. Those fortunate enough to be offered jobs while in the CCC were given honorable discharges. Even before leaving the CCC, individuals who performed outstanding work had opportunities for advancement. They were promoted to responsible positions as foremen on the technical supervisory staff at the camps when vacancies occurred.

While Reclamation planned and supervised the project work performed by enrollees during the weekdays, the Army had charge of the young men at all other times. Initially, the Army occupied the youths with recreational activities, but nothing in the way of a formal education or training program existed. Early on, some CCC administrators realized that the camps offered a ready-made opportunity to educate a vast number of poverty-stricken and poorly educated youths and enhance their prospects for the future. Late in 1933, President Roosevelt appointed Clarence S. Marsh as the first Director of Education, and, by 1934, a program had been instituted. Educational advisers were designated for each camp, and they, in turn, selected one enrollee to serve as an assistant who earned an extra \$6 a month.<sup>23</sup>

The June 1937 act that formally created the CCC officially recognized education as one of the program's responsibilities. The legislation included a new requirement for 10 hours a week of general educational or vocational training. Educational advisers expanded the academic curriculum, and, by 1938, 603 different classes were being offered at CCC camps. Enrollees tackled everything from reading, writing, and typing, to radio, first aid, and social courtesy. Army personnel, technical agency staff, local citizens, and even enrollees joined the educational advisers in teaching classes. Advanced students sometimes had opportunities to take courses at nearby colleges or vocational schools, or to enroll in correspondence classes.

At Reclamation CCC camps, the increased emphasis on education resulted in more training in matters related to operating and maintaining irrigation facilities.

Regular Reclamation employees assisted in the classroom by teaching technical subjects and clerical skills such as property accountability and recordkeeping. One or two evenings a week, work supervisors held classes in camp to supplement the on-the-job training. For example, an enrollee whose duty it was to refuel tractors with diesel fuel might learn the essential difference between diesel fuel and gasoline. A standard CCC truck driver's course taught truck drivers about vehicle maintenance, operation, and safety. Teachers used visual aids, such as miniature models and motion pictures, to enhance the classroom instruction. Foremen attended leadership courses to learn effective teaching methods (see figures 2.8 and 2.9).<sup>24</sup>

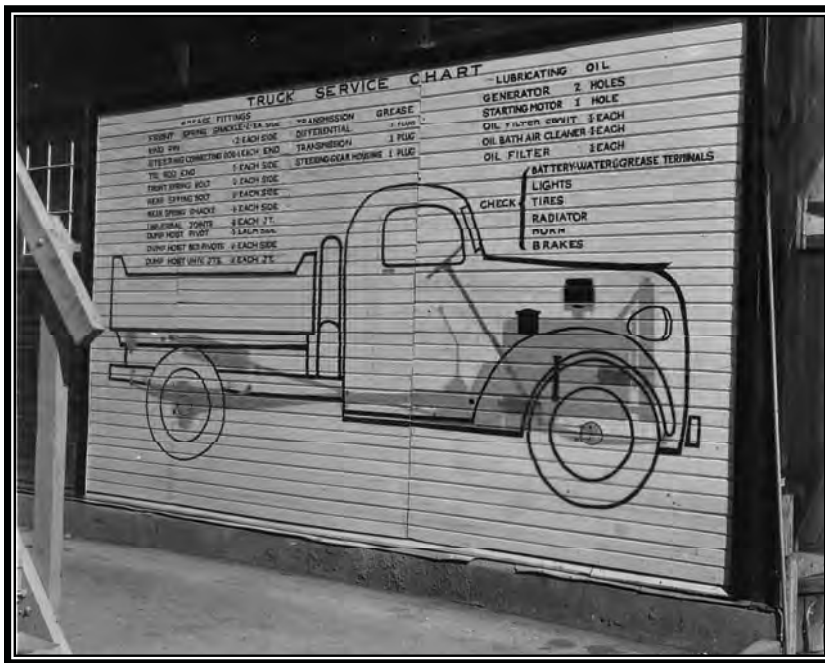


Figure 2.8 Truck servicing chart No. 1, Camp BR-61, North Platte Project, Nebraska, October 15, 1941.

Work supervisors/instructors developed outlines for their training courses to ensure presentation of the material in a logical sequence and to coordinate the field work with class time. The outlines usually covered a 6-month time frame, the length of one enrollment period. Probably the most commonly taught subjects at Reclamation camps consisted of equipment operation, and concrete and timber construction. With the extensive amount of automotive and heavy construction equipment in use on Reclamation CCC camps, special emphasis was given to training the operators of large fleets. Because of the potentially hazardous equipment being used daily by CCC enrollees, all of Reclamation's job training included safety instruction as a primary feature.<sup>25</sup> In calendar year 1937, the Bureau had the best safety record of all classes of CCC camps. Other courses mentioned in some of the Reclamation camp reports include spelling, typing,

blueprint reading, bee culture, warehousing, and shorthand (see figure 2.10). Enrollees who remained in the CCC for more than 6 months could take advanced classes.

Figure 2.9 Sheet metal and welding class students placing riveting, Camp Caldwell (BR-24), Boise Project, Idaho, November 14, 1941.



Towards the end of the CCC program, Reclamation directed all of its camps to furnish new enrollees with a series of publications intended to familiarize them with the agency and its role in conserving resources. The list included “Reclamation Home Creating—Wealth Producing—Self Sustaining,” “Grand Coulee Dam,” “Boulder Dam,” and “Central Valley Project.” Reclamation had plans to prepare its own pamphlet on the agency’s CCC program, but it is unknown whether this ever occurred.

Clearly, many young men benefitted from the expanded educational offerings and took advantage of them. Reclamation’s CCC camp reports and *Reclamation Era* articles repeatedly mentioned the gains achieved through the instructional programs. Yet they also had their critics, and not just within Reclamation, for being ill-defined and lacking clear structure. Evidence of these problems can be found in Reclamation correspondence. One CCC superintendent summed up the issues as follows:

Personally, I am disinclined to devote evenings to instructional work at the CCC Camp and in this I state the sentiment of the staff. Class room work for 200 young men is a job for educators and this feature of the CCC in my opinion cannot advance far until a business-like system is established that will include compulsory attendance, a well defined text of the work to be presented and an advance in pay for enrollees with the higher class room standing.<sup>26</sup>



In addition to the emphasis on developing “strong minds,” CCC camps also promoted building “strong, healthy bodies.” Physical conditioning was considered important for character improvement and for maintaining good camp morale (see figure 2.11). Planned athletic and recreational activities were part of all camp schedules. Enrollees participated in sports such as baseball, basketball, swimming, ping pong, or tennis. Many camps also offered regular recreational outings to nearby towns and attractions.

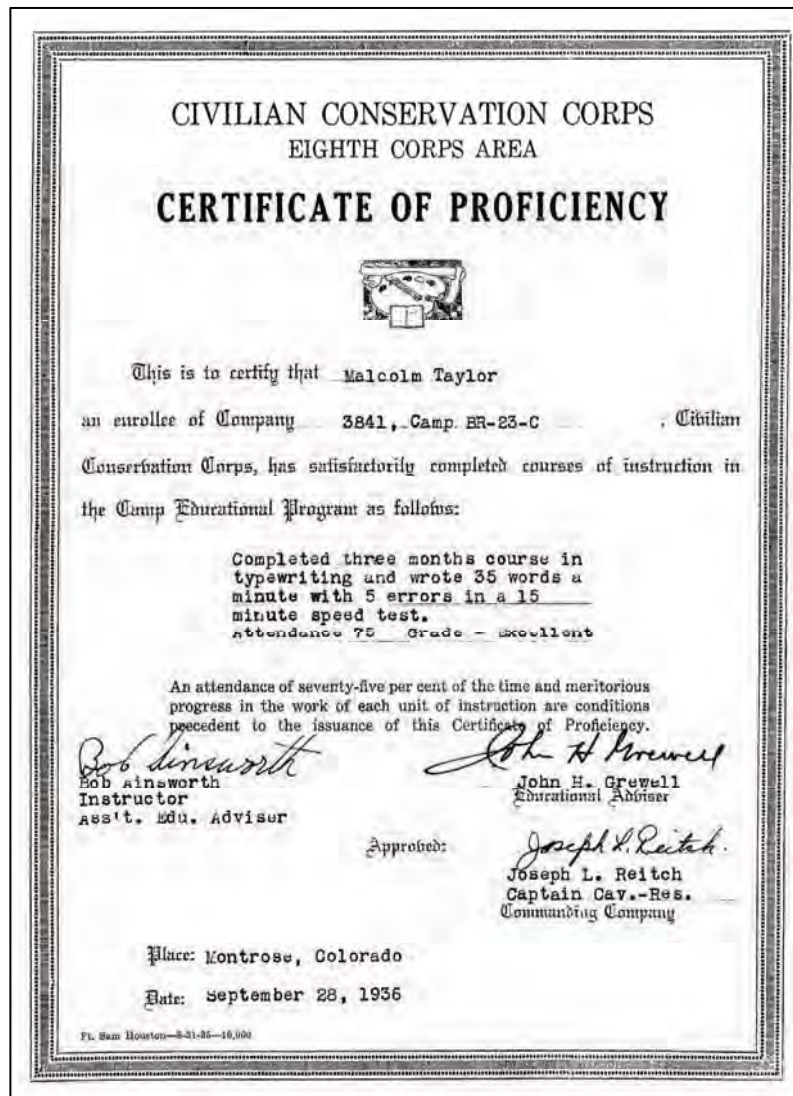


Figure 2.10 Certificate of proficiency in typing, awarded to Malcolm Taylor, enrollee at Camp BR-23, Uncompahgre Project, Colorado.

In spite of the strenuous physical work, mandated off-the-job training, and limited free time, most enrollees at Reclamation camps maintained a positive attitude. Morale fluctuated dependent on a number of factors including the temperaments

of the technical and Army supervisory staff, prior CCC experience of the enrollees, and the spirit of cooperation among all three groups. Since both Army and technical staff in supervisory positions moved about quite a bit, and enrollees also transferred frequently to different camps, morale at a given camp could change noticeably from one CCC period to another.

Some of the best information on camp morale can be gleaned from monthly camp administrative inspection reports that rated everything from adequate safety measures to condition of tools and equipment to quality of the education program. The level of Army cooperation and performance of the technical staff also received scrutiny. The very first question on the standard report form, however, concerned camp morale. Reclamation was fortunate to have Homer D. Graham as its camp inspector for much of the life of the CCC program. In June 1937, Commissioner Page reassigned Graham from his position as camp superintendent at BR-23 to administrative inspector. In this role, he officially acted as the field liaison officer between the Denver office and the camps, although he served more as a counselor to the CCC regional directors and camp superintendents.

It is apparent from Graham's inspection reports that he was dedicated to the success of the CCC program and the impact it could have on enrollees' lives. In a February 1939 letter Graham sent to Commissioner Page, thanking him for his support of the CCC program, he wrote: "I feel that we have a vital and serious responsibility toward these young men of our country. The way we handle this opportunity will, I believe, make a difference to the future success of these boys as well as to our country."

Among Graham's observations in traveling to Reclamation's camps, he noted repeatedly the importance of starting enrollees off on the right foot upon their arrival at camp. For some, especially those new to the CCC, it was a difficult adjustment period that created a challenge for camp personnel. Graham stressed the need for staff to provide a proper orientation to help the young men transition to the structure of camp life. In several instances, a small group of disruptive ringleaders stirred up trouble at a camp and wound up being discharged. Thereafter, morale noticeably improved. In other cases, it wasn't the enrollees, but uncooperative Army or technical staff, who created discontent. If conditions and morale seriously deteriorated as a result, the staff in question would be replaced. Dealing with problems such as these in a timely manner rather than allowing them to fester accomplished much towards maintaining a successful program.

Camp annual reports also reveal the pulse of camp morale. At Camp BR-20 on the Klamath Project, the men received praise in the camp's first annual report:



The manner in which the men in both camps (BR-41 as well) applied their efforts was truly remarkable, and it was not long before the camps became well established and the work program began to show signs of progress . . . The men wanted to work, to prove their worth and better themselves, when given the opportunity. Moreover, they proved this when offered the facilities of the buildings and teaching personnel at the Merrill and Tulelake high schools for evenings.<sup>27</sup>



Figure 2.11 Morning calisthenics at Camp Minidoka (BR-27), Minidoka Project, Idaho, date unknown.

At Camp BR-5, the Strawberry Valley summer camp, the “enrollees exhibited a fine cooperative spirit and high morale,” despite the remote locality of the camp. For the enrollees, the training and educational opportunities offered by the CCC opened new doors for the future. As Graham and others fervently hoped, the CCC forever changed the lives of the young men for the better.

Many camps produced their own informal newsletters that announced upcoming activities, the results of sports competitions, or other camp happenings. The newsletters provide a personal glimpse of daily life at the camps. A column in the October 1937 “Stanfield Echo” (Camp BR-44) advised new enrollees on proper behavior. Among the 20 items listed were the following: be careful of the type of language you use around camp and in public; do not smoke or flip cigarettes, or talk after the lights are out; the wasting of food is considered serious misconduct and will be punished accordingly; watch your actions while you are in town, you will be judged accordingly; and be sure to have all injuries tended to immediately whether on the road or in camp.

### **Public Response to Reclamation's CCC Program**

Reclamation's CCC program received both high praise and sharp criticism over its 9-year existence. Initially, some communities near Reclamation CCC camps responded warily to the arrival of 200 unskilled and poor young men from other parts of the country. The fears dissipated over time as the enrollees proved that

they presented no danger. For example, at Camp BR-7 on the Shoshone Project, a 1937 report stated: “Most of the enrollees have conducted themselves very satisfactorily in the various towns in which they spend their evenings and weekends and this has changed the attitude of many who were opposed to the establishment of CCC camps on the projects.”<sup>28</sup>

To reduce community apprehension and build strong support for the CCC program, the CCC director’s office instituted a variety of public relations efforts. Among the most popular of these were annual “open house” celebrations at as many camps as possible. These events provided the public with a perfect opportunity to meet enrollees and learn more about the program and its accomplishments. As further outreach, CCC men marched in local parades and erected elaborate booths and displays at events such as county fairs (see figures 2.12 and 2.13). In 1941, the enrollees of Camp BR-92 vied with nearly 50 other camps in a competition of CCC exhibits at the California State Fair and won first place honors. Their display included oil paintings, model boats, photography, a mineralogy and lapidary collection, and handmade knives. A film produced in 1937 entitled “Reclamation and the CCC” showed enrollees engaged at work on a number of Reclamation projects.<sup>29</sup> In addition to its public relations benefits, the film was intended to show potential enrollees the types of skills they might learn.



Figure 2.12  
Members of CCC  
Company No. 4822  
in Parade at Lovell  
(cooks in white),  
Camp Deaver  
(BR-7), Shoshone  
Project, Wyoming,  
date unknown.

As time went on, appreciation for the work accomplished by Reclamation’s CCC enrollees grew among water users and others who benefitted. Irrigators realized that without the assistance of the CCC program, they would not have been able to properly maintain their water delivery systems. A review of CCC annual reports, newspaper articles, and correspondence reveals the value placed on the CCC. For example, the “Report of the Director of Emergency Conservation Work Embracing Activities From April 5, 1933 through June 30, 1935” stated: “The E.C.W. reclamation camps have been well received by the

people living on the projects, and the enrollees enjoy a preferred standing in the communities in which the camps are located.”<sup>30</sup> A sample local newspaper article validates the report:

It is pointed out that at the time the CCC program was launched here, the district was financially unable to undertake absolutely vital work, such as renewal of structures, which, had they not been restored, would have been practically useless in many cases and consequent impairment of the ability of settlers to meet their obligations to the government.<sup>31</sup>



Figure 2.13 CCC booth, Camp Orland (BR-78), Orland Project, California, September 18, 1940.

In spite of the support, Reclamation also faced criticism about the appropriate use of CCC camps on its projects. In a letter dated July 26, 1937, to Secretary of the Interior Ickes, Commissioner Page strongly defended Reclamation's program and requested the maximum number of camps possible. "My contention is that nowhere are the efforts of these boys used to better advantage than in the water and soil conservation activities of the Bureau of Reclamation."<sup>32</sup> He disputed the suggestion that work performed by the CCC was ordinary maintenance that should be undertaken by the irrigation districts. To the contrary, he stated, a definite distinction existed between routine maintenance carried on as required by the districts and the betterment of facilities undertaken by the CCC, notwithstanding emergency situations such as serious droughts, floods, or other calamities. Page also countered the complaint lodged by organized labor that the CCC took jobs away from locals. He stated that this had occurred in just one instance, where camp operations had been turned over to a contractor for the Government. Transfer of the camp's supervision to a Bureau employee and a slight change to the work program had entirely removed the objections.

In early 1938, Reclamation's CCC program continued to draw fire from people who asserted that it benefitted only a select population of private citizens, namely project water users. President Roosevelt responded to the criticism by contemplating the closure of all Reclamation camps. This incited an outpouring of support for Reclamation's CCC program from communities throughout the West served by Reclamation projects. A newspaper headline in Torrington, Wyoming, proclaimed "Valley Chamber Voices Protest to Removal of CCC." In the same State, an article in the *Powell Tribune* on the proposed closures proclaimed,

As to the CCC in reclamation work, we have regarded the camp at Deaver as of great benefit to the general farming community there. . . We need more CCC camps and fewer jails; we need more CCC camps and less unemployment; we need more CCC camps for the improvement in mind, morals and body of the boys themselves—that is more important and more of value to us all than the work they do.<sup>33</sup>

To continue its CCC program and end accusations that the program's activities did not advance the general welfare of the people, Reclamation was required to make the following adjustments in February 1938:

1. All work had to be performed on federally owned land and had to be for the purpose of conserving, safeguarding, improving or developing property in which the Government had a direct financial interest, or for the purpose of providing recreational facilities on federally owned land for the general public.
2. If the work contemplated was normally financed by water users or local organizations, the CCC operations had to be confined to those projects or subdivisions thereof where, through adversity or other cause the local interests were unable to finance the proposed program.
3. The task assigned had to be suitable for prosecution by the CCC and such as would advance the training and experience of the enrollees.<sup>34</sup>

To comply with the stipulations, Reclamation made a number of modifications to work activities performed at its camps. In an article in the April 1938 *The Reclamation Era*, the author presented a positive outlook for the program's future: "It is expected that the conservation activities of the CCC camps on reclamation projects will go forward with renewed effort, now that the clouds surrounding work in the past have cleared and the path we are to follow is clearly marked."<sup>35</sup>

One immediate change that Reclamation instituted, upon being assured of the continuation of its CCC program, was the requirement for supervisory and facilitating personnel to wear uniforms. This stipulation already existed at camps assigned to other entities. In a March 15, 1938, memo sent out by R.B. Williams, he included specifications for the uniforms and instructed CCC field offices that the clothing had to be worn in camp, on the work projects (with some exceptions), and on official duty outside of camp (see figure 2.14). Technical agency personnel were reminded to keep their field clothes as clean and neat as

practicable at all times, to shave daily, and to maintain their quarters and themselves in an orderly condition. Williams also made it very clear that individuals required to wear uniforms had to pay for them out of their own pockets.<sup>36</sup>

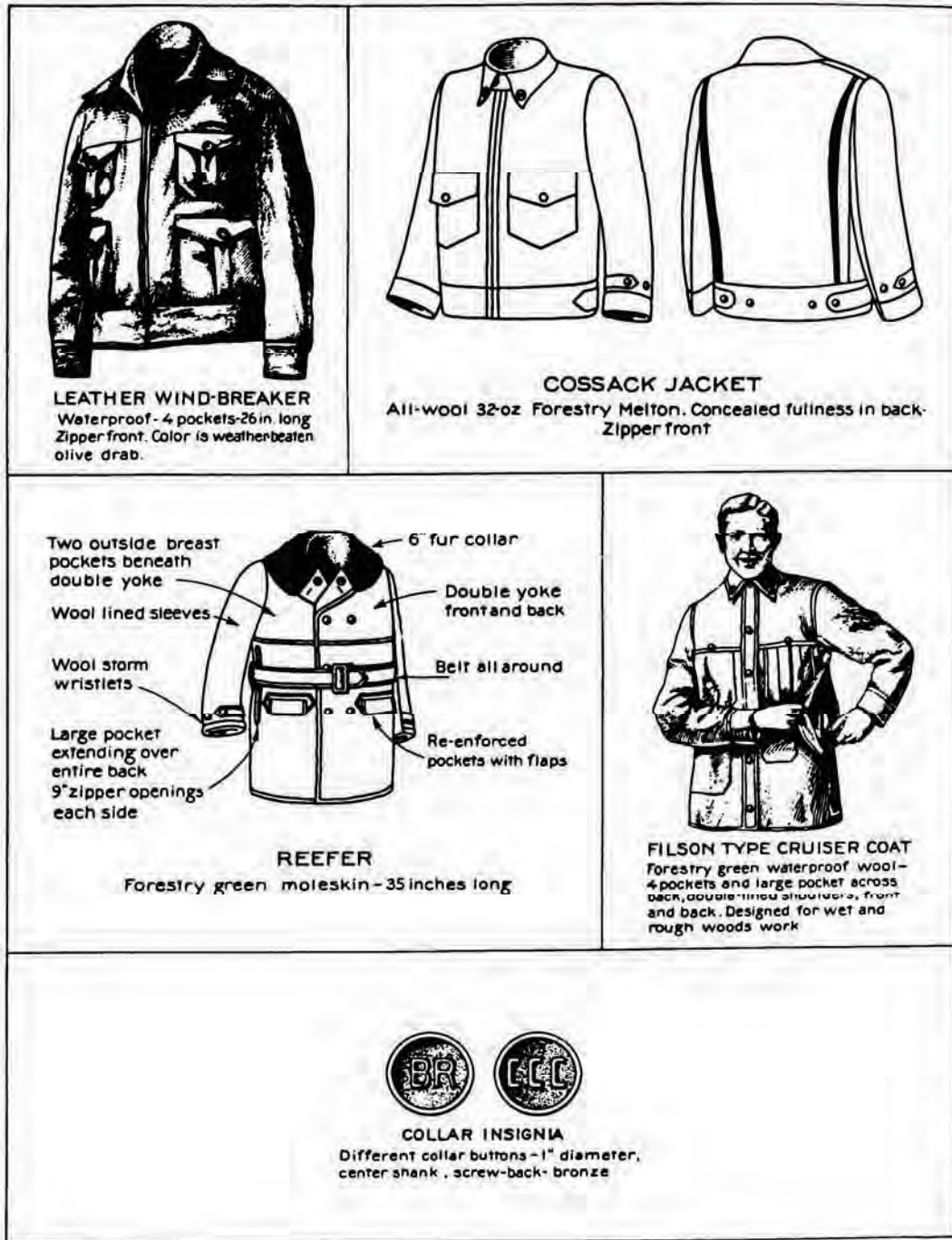


Figure 2.14 Uniforms for Reclamation CCC supervisory personnel, March 1938.

Even as the economy improved in the late 1930s and CCC men found employment elsewhere, agricultural communities expressed support for continuation of Reclamation's CCC program. Financially strapped irrigation districts on Reclamation projects lobbied legislators and Reclamation for the establishment of one or more camps in their areas. Elsewhere, communities faced with the closure of camps defended their existence. When the termination of Camp BR-7 was proposed in March 1940, a Powell, Wyoming, newspaper asserted: "The American people, in a general sense, do not favor any serious curtailment of the CCC. Only in certain cases where the work has been completed do they favor any discontinuance of a CCC camp."<sup>37</sup> Another reason entered into the argument for maintaining the CCC camps, and it revolved around the Nation's expanding defense program. Some preferred the wholesome labor of CCC activities to training young men for war in Europe.

While Reclamation's CCC camps operated, for the most part, without difficulties, an incident at Camp Reno (Camp BR-37) proved to be a highly publicized exception. On November 30, 1936, 100 enrollees, all from New York City, went on strike, declaring that they were dissatisfied with the food being served. They also criticized the commanding officer as being "too arbitrary."<sup>38</sup> The strike was short-lived; after the dismissal of a half-dozen ringleaders, the young men returned to work a few days later, and the situation calmed down. An investigation of the event by the War Department attributed the disturbance to repeated difficulties among the Army's commanding officer of the camp, the foremen, and enrollees. The commanding officer was replaced, and no further disruptive episodes occurred.

A similar, but less volatile, situation occurred at Camp BR-48 in the late fall of 1937. A decline in morale was noted at the camp, and on November 22, only 42 enrollees reported for project duty. Fifteen enrollees were dishonorably discharged for refusal to work. The insubordination stemmed from growing dissatisfaction with Commanding Officer Captain George H. Seitz, and he was transferred to a camp in Idaho. Thereafter, morale at Camp BR-48 improved.

## **Termination of Reclamation CCC Camps**

Reclamation entered fiscal year 1942 with 43 CCC camps assigned to it. Eight new camps had been approved in Wyoming, Colorado, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota (Camps BR-93 through BR-97, BR-99, BR-101, and BR-102). Seven were established in the summer and fall of 1941, and the last one in January 1942. The new camps were associated with projects approved under Public Law 76-398 enacted on August 11, 1939. The legislation authorized the Secretary of the Interior to construct "water conservation and utilization projects in the Great Plains and arid and semiarid areas of the United States" with labor assistance provided by the Work Projects Administration or a similar Federal



agency such as the CCC. As one of several agencies participating in the program, Reclamation's role was to construct irrigation facilities to help meet local water needs. By the end of June 1942, considerable progress had been made.

In 1941, Reclamation also had hopes of augmenting its CCC program elsewhere and was successful in obtaining permission for a number of other new camps. To assist on work in Utah in the area of Gooseberry Reservoir and on the proposed Scofield Dam, Reclamation received approval for Camps BR-100 in Sanpete County and BR-127 in Carbon County. Two additional camps were assigned to Water Conservation and Utilization projects: Camp BR-110 on the Mann Creek Project in western Idaho and Camp BR-113 on the Saco Divide Project in Montana. On the Mirage Flats Project in Nebraska, Reclamation received the go ahead for Camps BR-114 and BR-115, but their construction had to be at Reclamation expense. The same requirement applied to Camp BR-112 approved for the Buffalo Rapids Project in Montana. Other camps permitted by the CCC included Camps BR-121 and BR-122 on the Angostura Project in North Dakota and Camp BR-129 for the newly authorized Eden Project in Wyoming.<sup>39</sup>

Despite Reclamation's success in obtaining approval for additional camps, unforeseeable events derailed the CCC program. Like other Government CCC participants, Reclamation immediately felt the impact of the United States' entry into World War II. Within a few weeks of the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Conrad Wirth, the Interior representative on the CCC advisory council, instructed each bureau to provide him with a list of the "absolutely essential" and "borderline" camps. Alfred Golze drafted a response in which he identified 27 essential Reclamation camps and 7 borderline camps. Wirth then appealed to CCC Director McEntee to continue the program within Interior based on the need for camps to protect the country's vital natural resources.<sup>40</sup>

Reclamation justified continuation of its CCC camps during the war on the basis of its contribution to the production of a reliable and adequate food supply. Furthermore, Reclamation asserted it could provide trained construction equipment operators to meet the demands of the armed services and defense industry. The emphasis of Reclamation's CCC program paid off; during the months immediately following Pearl Harbor, Reclamation fared much better than other bureaus within Interior in retaining its CCC camps.<sup>41</sup>

Nonetheless, Reclamation soon faced a sharp reduction in its number of camps, as the CCC program wound down. In March 1942, Wirth informed the Bureau that no CCC camps would be allocated to Reclamation for fiscal year 1943 beginning on July 1, 1942. Of the 350 camps to be operated throughout the country, 113 would be allotted to Interior and 237 to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Most of the Department of the Interior camps would be assigned to the NPS, with the rest divided between the newly created U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the General Land Office.

Reclamation objected to being cut out of the program and, on March 23, 1942, sent a letter to E.K. Burlew, First Assistant Secretary of Interior, outlining how the decision would negatively affect the agency. The letter was referred to Conrad Wirth, who called Golze to see about reaching an agreement on retaining one or two camps for Reclamation. Golze declined the suggestion and, in a briefing memo to Commissioner Page, wrote:

. . . it is my feeling that operation of camps on Reclamation projects is perfectly valid and justifiable under war conditions even to the extent of taking precedence over the fighting of forest fires in the National Parks. . . In the past Mr. Wirth has quite often been successful in having his views on CCC administration accepted even when their detrimental effect on bureaus other than the Park Service is self-evident. If the Bureau of Reclamation wishes to retain its CCC camps, considerable aggressive action will be necessary in the Secretary's office to offset his recommendations.<sup>42</sup>

The tone of Golze's comments indicates that some tensions clearly existed within Interior over the administration of the CCC program. In the end, Congress decided to terminate the program on June 30, 1942, and Reclamation's seven remaining CCC camps shut down the following month.<sup>43</sup> Reclamation received a small CCC allotment for all necessary expenses to liquidate its CCC activities during fiscal year 1943.

Even though the war resulted in the termination of Reclamation's CCC program, for some camps, it was the beginning of another significant chapter in their history. The military used a number of vacated camps as housing for conscientious objectors (Camps BR-75, BR-76, BR-77, BR-93, BR-95, BR-97, and BR-99), war prisoners (Camps BR-2 and BR-39), or Japanese internees (Camp BR-42). In other instances, Reclamation requested and obtained ownership of camps not needed by the military. If Reclamation did not intend to use the buildings, some or all of them were salvaged or sold.

The last record found pertaining to the disposition of Reclamation's CCC camps is a memo from Avis Dyson to Commissioner Harry Bashore dated March 29, 1944.<sup>44</sup> The correspondence provides the status of former CCC camps still in place on Reclamation projects. The data was intended to help plan postwar activities or work for prisoners of war. At the time, 23 abandoned CCC camps remained on Reclamation projects. They were being used for a variety of purposes, some of which are mentioned above.



## Endnotes for Chapter 2

- <sup>1</sup> William Rowley, *The Bureau of Reclamation: Origins and Growth to 1945* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2006), 214-215.
- <sup>2</sup> Timothy Egan, *The Worst Hard Time* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2006), 56-58.
- <sup>3</sup> Alfred R. Golze, "The CCC on Federal Reclamation Projects," *Civil Engineering* 9 (November 1939), 654-656.
- <sup>4</sup> H.T. Cory, "Civilian Conservation Corps Work on Reclamation Projects," *The Reclamation Era* 26 (January 1936), 22.
- <sup>5</sup> Memorandum from D.S. Stuver, supervising engineer, to the Commissioner, October 14, 1935, Box 179, Entry 7, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.
- <sup>6</sup> "Final Report, Civilian Conservation Corps Activities, Bureau of Reclamation," February 1943, p. 4, Box 44, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.
- <sup>7</sup> For example, proposed Camp BR-60, to be called Camp Sheep Creek, would have been located on the North Platte Project. "Form BR-ECW-14, ECW Work Program Sheet," Box 90, Entry 21, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.
- <sup>8</sup> Office of the Director, Emergency Conservation Work, "Circular Letter of May 11, 1936," on the subject of disposal of surplus property, Box 11, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.
- <sup>9</sup> Alfred R. Golze appears to have joined Reclamation in 1934 and became involved in the Bureau's CCC program early on. He served as Assistant to the Supervising Engineer, E.C.W. until August 16, 1936, when he was promoted to Supervising Engineer, E.C.W. Golze wrote numerous articles on Reclamation's CCC activities for *The Reclamation Era*. He went on to become Assistant Commissioner of Reclamation in the late 1950s. John Page became Acting Commissioner of Reclamation upon the death of Elwood Mead in late January 1936. Page assumed the Commissioner's office on January 25, 1937, and remained in that position until the summer of 1943.
- <sup>10</sup> Alfred R. Golze, "The CCC on Federal Reclamation Projects," 654.
- <sup>11</sup> Letter from Commissioner Page to R.F. Walter, June 26, 1939, Box 44, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.
- <sup>12</sup> Memorandum to the Commissioner from A.R. Golze, November 5, 1941, Box 44, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.
- <sup>13</sup> E.O. Larson, "Work of ECW Camps-Utah," draft article for *The Reclamation Era*, no date, File 035.01, Box 36, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.
- <sup>14</sup> Funding had not been available for recreation, nor could it be, due to the requirement for repayment of project expenses by the water users. On the early projects, no monies were provided to clear reservoir areas or remove construction plant and temporary buildings, and this had resulted in "unsightly surroundings" according to Commissioner Page. In a letter to Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes, he identified recreation as increasingly important to Reclamation projects and felt it essential to improve the appearance of government property. He identified recreation as the third major class of work being accomplished by the CCC on Reclamation projects. See Box 68, Entry 22, RG 115.
- <sup>15</sup> "Final Report, Civilian Conservation Activities, Bureau of Reclamation," February 1943, p. 3, Box 44, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.
- <sup>16</sup> Alfred Golze, "C.C.C. Accomplishments on Reclamation Projects," *The Reclamation Era* 27 (January 1937), 20.
- <sup>17</sup> Alfred Golze, "Civilian Conservation Corps Accomplishments on Federal Reclamation Projects," *The Reclamation Era* 28 (September 1938), 192.
- <sup>18</sup> Alfred Golze, "C. C. C. and Emergency Work," *The Reclamation Era* 27 (August 1937), 188-190.
- <sup>19</sup> Alfred Golze, "Reclamation Work Trains C.C.C. Men," *The Reclamation Era* 27 (February 1937), 38-39.

<sup>20</sup> Letter from H. Bashore, Assistant Commissioner, to P.E. Gurvin, December 31, 1940, Box 1, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

<sup>21</sup> Alfred Golze, "Reclamation Work Trains C.C.C. Men," 38-39.

<sup>22</sup> Alfred Golze, "Reclamation Trains the CCC Enrollee," *The Reclamation Era* 29 (March 1939), 62-64.

<sup>23</sup> Joseph M. Speakman, "Into the Woods: The First Year of the Civilian Conservation Corps," *Prologue* 38, No. 3 (Fall 2006).

<sup>24</sup> Alfred Golze, "CCC Accomplishments on Federal Reclamation Projects, Fiscal Year 1940," *The Reclamation Era* 30 (November 1940), 318.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 320.

<sup>26</sup> Letter from F.C. Youngblutt to Commissioner John Page dated January 21, 1939, Box 71, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

<sup>27</sup> "Period Report of Emergency Conservation Work Camps Under Bureau of Reclamation, Klamath Project, Sixth Enrollment Period," on file at Reclamation's Klamath Office.

<sup>28</sup> "Narrative Report on CCC for the Ninth Enrollment Period Ending September 30, 1937, BR Camp No. 7," Box 49, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

<sup>29</sup> In March 1939, the Commissioner of Reclamation was notified that the film had been selected for showing in the Federal building at the Golden Gate International Exposition. The selection was made on the basis that the film provided an excellent representation of the work conducted by the U.S. Department of the Interior. It appears that a second film of CCC activities on the Newlands and Central Valley Projects was produced in 1939 by chief photographer B.D. Glaha of the Sacramento office. Neither film has been located. See Box 35, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

<sup>30</sup> Emergency Conservation Work, "Report of the Director of Emergency Conservation Work, Embracing Activities From April 5, 1933 through June 30, 1935," p. 37, Box 47, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

<sup>31</sup> "Rumor of Abandonment of CCC Camps on Reclamation Projects Worries Fallon," *Fallon Eagle*, January 22, 1938, Box 34, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

<sup>32</sup> Letter from Commissioner John Page to Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes dated July 26, 1937, Box 68, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

<sup>33</sup> "Write Congressmen About This," *Powell Tribune*, January 20, 1938, Box 34, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

<sup>34</sup> "CCC Work to Continue on Reclamation Projects," *The Reclamation Era* 28 (April 1938), 74.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> Memo from R.B. Williams, Acting Commissioner, to all CCC field offices, March 15, 1938, Box 45, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver. Conformance with the uniform requirements was taken seriously and became one of the items noted in camp administrative inspection reports. For example, in a July 1940 report for Camps BR-84 and BR-85, inspector Homer D. Graham wrote that Superintendent Eich had, on several occasions, worn a green hat that did not comply with the prescribed style and shade of green (Homer D. Graham, "Report of Administrative Inspector, July 18, 1940," Box 91, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).

<sup>37</sup> "Economy Stroke at Deaver CCC Camp," *Powell Tribune*, March 7, 1940, Box 145, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

<sup>38</sup> "100 CCC Workers Go On Strike at Camp Near Reno," *Reno-Evening Gazette*, November 30, 1936, 12.

<sup>39</sup> Kenneth Baldrige, "Nine Years of Achievement: The Civilian Conservation Corps in Utah," Ph.D. diss., Brigham Young University, May 1971), 233; letter from S.O. Harper, chief engineer, to L.H. Bixby, Lt. Colonel, Fort Lincoln, North Dakota, February 20, 1941, Box 81, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver; memo from S.O. Harper, chief engineer, to construction engineer, Hemingford, Nebraska, July 15, 1941, Box 115, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver; memo from H.W. Bashore, Acting Commissioner, for the Director of the Grazing Service, March 8, 1941, Box 12, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver; letter from H.E. Weatherwax, acting departmental representative on the advisory council, CCC, to Fred Norrell, U.S. Department of Agriculture representative on the advisory council, CCC, September 8, 1941, Box 12, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver; and memo from Walker Young, acting chief engineer, to Commissioner, August 15, 1941, Box 86, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

<sup>40</sup> Memo from A.R. Golze to Reclamation Commissioner, December 24, 1941, Box 44, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver; letter from Conrad L. Wirth to J.J. McEntee, January 8, 1942, Box 44, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

<sup>41</sup> Memo from Reclamation Commissioner to Chief Engineer dated March 6, 1942, Box 115, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

<sup>42</sup> Memo from A.R. Golze to Commissioner Page, April 2, 1942, Box 44, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

<sup>43</sup> Reclamation's seven remaining camps were Camps BR-64, BR-93, BR-95, BR-97, BR-99, BR-101, and BR-102.

<sup>44</sup> Memo from Avis M. Dyson to Commissioner Bashore, March 29, 1944, Box 13, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

## Chapter 3

# Conclusion

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Even though Reclamation was but a minor recipient of CCC benefits (in April 1937, Reclamation was assigned 34 camps, which represented only 1.7 percent of the total number), the Bureau continually touted the positive results attained by the enrollees. The assignment of CCC camps to Reclamation occurred at a time when western agriculture was in critical straits. Work completed by the enrollees helped revitalize an array of existing irrigation projects and brought new water to other areas. A few figures illustrate the impressive volume of accomplishments of CCC forces on Reclamation facilities: more than 60,000,000 square yards of canals and drainage ditches were cleaned or cleared; 1,800,000 square yards of canal were lined with impervious material, and 2,800,000 square yards were riprapped for protection against erosion; 3,000 miles of operating roads had been constructed along canal banks; 39,000 acres of reservoir sites were cleared of brush and trees; and 15,800 water control structures had been built. The contributions of the CCC were summarized in Reclamation's final report on the program as follows:

The fine work of the Civilian Conservation Corps by 1942 had brought the Federal irrigation projects back to a high standard of physical excellence. The irrigation systems are now in generally good condition, able to deliver required amounts of water and by the permanency of their rehabilitation they are insured against interruptions of consequence.<sup>1</sup>

Equally important, Reclamation's CCC program succeeded in putting desperate young men to work. The experience equipped enrollees with valuable skills and training that opened new doors for a more promising future. The CCC offered an opportunity "to learn in the great outdoors—how to work, how to live, and how to get ahead."<sup>2</sup>

## Endnotes for Conclusion

<sup>1</sup> “Final Report, Civilian Conservation Corps Activities, Bureau of Reclamation,” 5.

<sup>2</sup> *Congressional Record*, 76<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> Session, Senate (February 2, 1939), 1065.

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The best sources of information on Reclamation's CCC program are the records located at the National Archives, Rocky Mountain Region, in Denver, Colorado. Reclamation's CCC records can be found in Record Group 115 under a number of different entries beginning with 21 and ending with 34. Among other things, the wealth of records contain a variety of weekly, monthly, and yearly reports for the various camps; publicity; correspondence; financial records; standard forms reporting completion of authorized work; records of employees; clippings from newspapers and congressional records; and photographs. The most widely used CCC records for this book are found in entries 21, 22, 26, and 31. They are titled, respectively, "Records of the Supervising Engineer of the Bureau of Reclamation in Charge of Emergency Conservation Work," "General Records of the Bureau of Reclamation Relating to CCC Activities," "Work Progress Reports," and "Photographs and Related Correspondence." Reclamation project histories, which document the construction of individual projects, are another valuable source of information on CCC project activities. These volumes are arranged alphabetically by Reclamation project and can be found in Record Group 115, Entry 10, at the National Archives in Denver.

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## **Appendix A**

# **Individual Camp Forms in Numerical Sequence**

## BUREAU OF RECLAMATION CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS STUDY

<b>Camp Number</b>	<b>BR-1</b>	<b>Camp Name</b>	Minatare
<b>State</b>	Nebraska	<b>County</b>	Scotts Bluff
<b>Location</b>	Lake Minatare, T. 23 N., R. 53 W., sec. 31		
<b>Reclamation Project</b>	North Platte	<b>Army Corps Area</b>	7
<b>Date Established</b>	July 1934	<b>Date Terminated</b>	May 15, 1942

### **CAMP HISTORY/ACTIVITIES**

The expansive North Platte Project was among the first five projects authorized under the Reclamation Act of 1902. Project lands span 111 miles along the North Platte River from Guernsey, Wyoming, to Bridgeport, Nebraska. Features include five storage dams, four diversion dams, one pumping plant, one powerplant, and about 2,000 miles of canals, laterals, and drains. Among the storage facilities is Minatare Dam, located northeast of Scotts Bluff. The dam creates a relatively small irrigation storage reservoir named Lake Minatare. With a shoreline of about 10 miles, this lake was selected as the site for Camp Minatare, BR-1.

Camp BR-1 was one of six CCC camps that operated on the North Platte Project; the others included *Camps BR-9, BR-10, BR-53, BR-61, and BR-83*. Construction of Camp BR-1 began with the arrival of the first enrollees in late July 1934, and was completed December 31, 1934. The camp was initially called Camp DBR-1, which designated it as a drought relief camp. These camps were part of the CCC program but were confined to States that had suffered severely from drought and were financed by drought relief funds. The camp was also identified as Veterans Conservation Corps Camp (VCCC) 2745, signaling that enrollees were veterans. Their average age, at least initially, was 42.

With the manpower available under the CCC program, Lake Minatare's use was expanded to include recreational facilities. Each year, time was allotted for enrollees to work on development of the lake area. When Camp BR-1 enrollees arrived there in the summer of 1934, they found the shoreline thickly overgrown with saplings and underbrush. The fertile sandy loam edging the lake offered an ideal bed for cottonwoods and willows to grow.

The first job tackled by the CCC enrollees consisted of thinning trees, which left the largest and healthiest in place. The young men also removed undesirable species of willows to create space for picnic areas. The CCC carried out these activities during the winter. Next, the enrollees constructed a variety of facilities, using stone as the predominant building material. Rock was obtained from a quarry opened up about 8 miles from camp. Working only with hand tools, crews removed a lot of earth and poor quality material to expose the better rock.

Having quarried suitable stones, enrollees built a gateway of native rock creating an entrance to both CCC camp and park. The main columns forming the portals were 18 feet high and readily visible for many miles on the road leading to the park. The men then built 23 rustic rock camp ovens at the reservoir in conjunction with 2 campgrounds. Continuing with the recreational improvements, enrollees constructed more than 50 combination picnic benches and tables from pine poles and slabs. By the fall of 1936, the list of CCC accomplishments included two double toilets, a bathhouse for men and women, and two shelters, all of native rock quarried, cut, and placed by enrollees. One shelter, which still stands, contained a large room with a fireplace and rustic furniture, a kitchen equipped with a cooking range, and a smaller room for wood storage. A large covered porch flanked two sides of the building.

### **Camp BR-1, Camp History/Activities (continued)**

A local civic organization sponsored the shelter and raised money for the construction materials. The group furnished all the roofing materials, partitions, doors, windows, and hardware. As an additional enhancement to the lake, enrollees constructed a 10-mile drive around the perimeter.

The most ambitious structure built by the Camp BR-1 enrollees, and perhaps the most interesting of all Reclamation CCC edifices, is the five-story combination observation tower and picnic shelter located on a point extending into the lake. Robert B. Balcom, a Reclamation engineer and senior foreman at the camp, prepared the plans for the tower. Constructed of native rock, the structure rises 55 feet and resembles a lighthouse. A circular reinforced concrete staircase leads to an observation deck at the top. In an article written at the time of the tower's completion, the author exclaimed that the view from the top included two famous landmarks of the Oregon Trail: Scotts Bluff and Chimney Rock (*The Reclamation Era* 1940). At the base of the structure, four rooms were placed in the form of a cross. Two of the wings served as bathhouses, and the other two formed semi-open picnic shelters.

Lake Minatare also served as a valuable bird and game refuge. Enrollees planted hardwood trees such as American elm, green ash, hackberry, ponderosa pine, and cedar to intersperse with the more short-lived willows and cottonwoods. The trees were raised in two nurseries operated by the enrollees. They planted mulberries, plums, choke cherries, and grapevines to attract and feed the many birds. Areas immediately surrounding the permanent buildings were landscaped with shrubs. The CCC transformed an area once considered desolate into a shade-filled refuge.

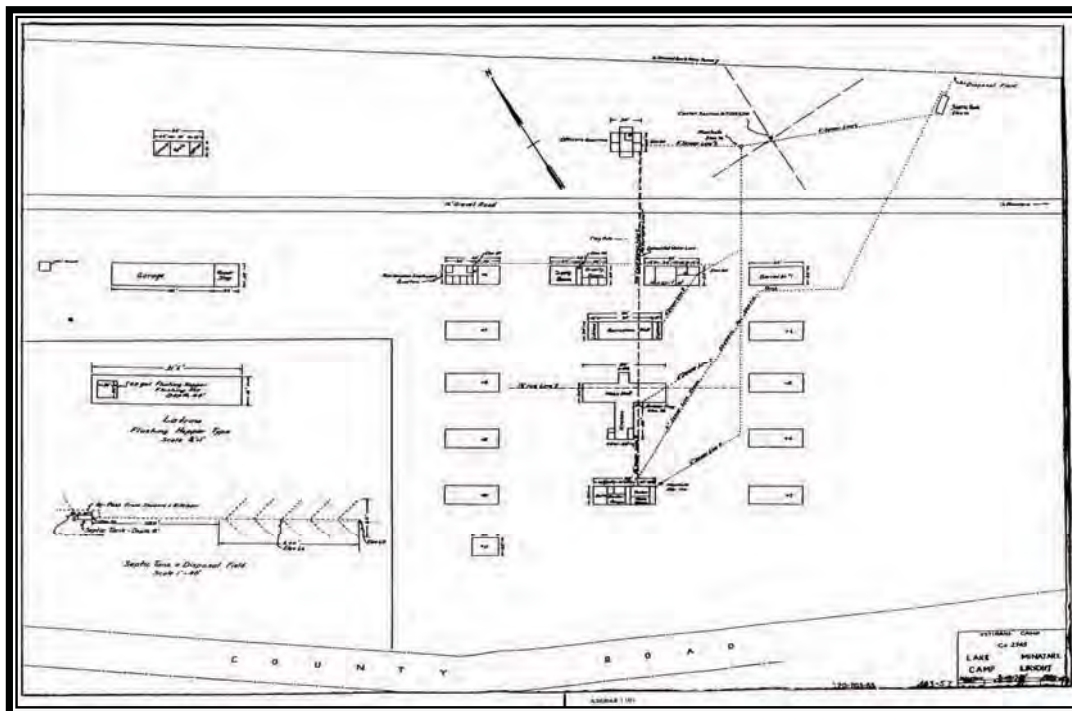
The newly created park began drawing visitors right away. By 1940, it was not uncommon on weekends for 500 cars to enter the park. Picnicking, boating, fishing, swimming, and camping were popular activities at the lake. Three wells drilled by enrollees furnished water to thirsty recreationists. Work by the CCC was described as follows: "The enrollee veterans are conscientious in their work and take great pride in what they have accomplished, as well they may. Lake Minatare park will remain as an enduring monument to the VCCC and to the Bureau of Reclamation Camp No. 1" (*The Reclamation Era* 1940). Given the taxing physical labor undertaken by the veterans, it is not surprising that they worked at a slower pace than the younger men at other camps and accomplished less in the same time. This concerned Reclamation's camp Administrative Inspector Homer D. Graham, who believed that due to their age and physical condition, veterans should be assigned less strenuous work.

In addition to the highly visible and attractive improvements at Lake Minatare, Camp BR-1 enrollees achieved a great deal in the urgent work of lining laterals with concrete, building minor concrete water control structures, riprapping canals and laterals, eradicating gophers and poisonous weeds, and planting tens of thousands of trees for windbreaks. They also planted drought and alkali resistant forage crops to demonstrate viable farming practices.

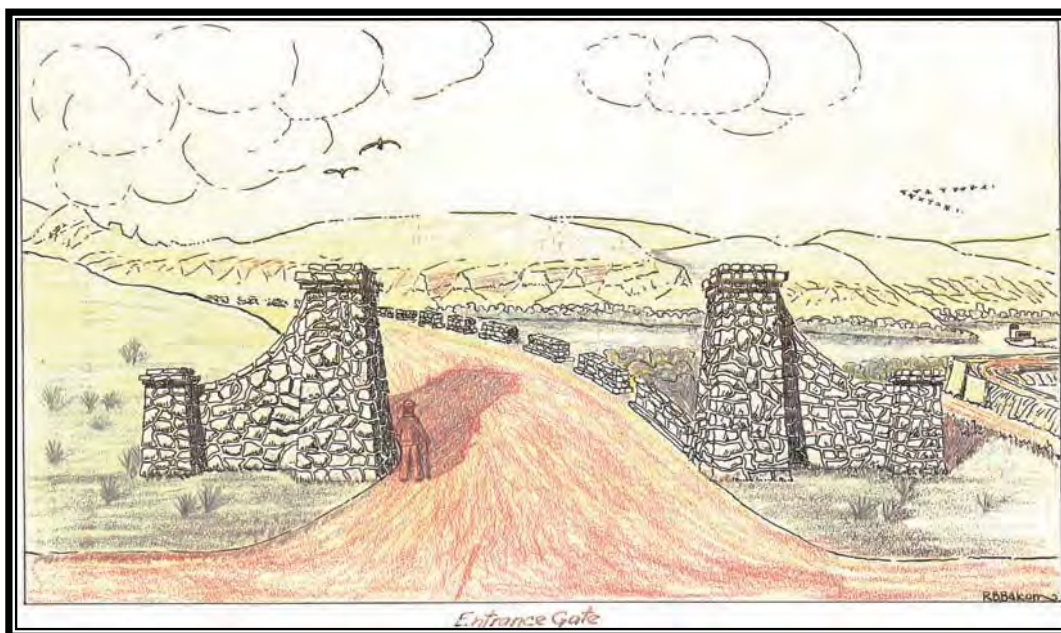
Today, the outstanding accomplishments of the CCC still endure at Lake Minatare, now managed as a State recreation area by Nebraska Game and Parks Commission. The south entrance gate and smaller main entrance gate, lighthouse, shelter house, and bathhouse continue to exemplify the high-quality masonry work produced by the enrollees. On September 8, 2004, the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office determined the CCC era resources at Lake Minatare eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places.

## Camp BR-1 (continued)

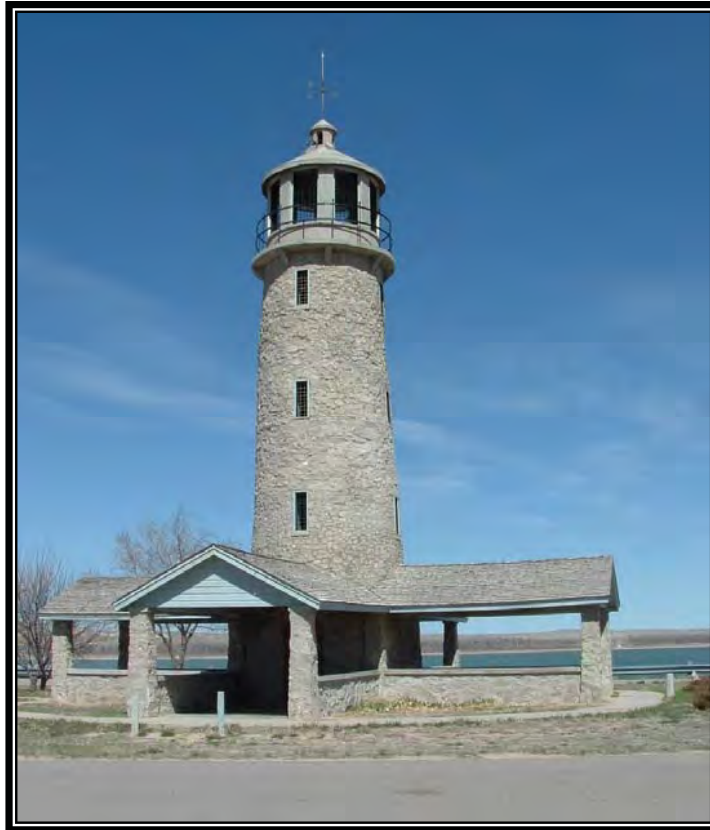
<b>CAMP DESCRIPTION (number/type of buildings)</b>
Camp BR-1 was built adjacent to Lake Minatare on land belonging to Reclamation. When the enrollees arrived in July 1934, they first established a tent camp. Construction of winter quarters was initiated shortly thereafter, and by the end of September the men had moved into barracks. Buildings at the camp consisted of 10 barracks, officers' quarters, administration building, hospital, recreation hall, mess hall and kitchen, bathhouse, and latrine. There was also a garage and storehouse.
<b>DISPOSITION/CURRENT STATUS</b>
On August 1, 1942, the camp was transferred to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha, Nebraska, under the jurisdiction of the Commanding Officer, Scotts Bluff Air Base. Over the next year and a half, the camp was used occasionally by air base personnel for recreational purposes. Five buildings had been removed by that time. Today, nothing remains of the camp, except for some foundations and a fireplace that was in one of the CCC buildings. The property is still owned by Reclamation.
<b>SOURCES</b>
E-mail and phone correspondence with Dan Thornton, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, April 2008.
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"The Recreational Development of Lake Minatare," <i>The Reclamation Era</i> 30 (May 1940), 129-30.
<b>Recorded by: Christine Pfaff, Bureau of Reclamation, Denver, 2009</b>



Camp BR-1: North Platte Project, camp layout, July 1937 (Reclamation, Wyoming Area Office).



Camp BR-1: North Platte Project, sketch of entrance gate by R.B. Balcom, January 1935 (Box 181, Entry 7, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-1: North Platte Project, lighthouse, 2008 (courtesy of Dan Thornton, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission).



Camp BR-1: North Platte Project, change house, 2008 (courtesy of Dan Thornton, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission).





Camp BR-1: North Platte Project, shelter house, 2008 (courtesy of Dan Thornton, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission).



Camp BR-1: North Platte Project, plaque on shelter house, 2008 (courtesy of Dan Thornton, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission).



## BUREAU OF RECLAMATION CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS STUDY

<b>Camp Number</b>	<b>BR-2</b>	<b>Camp Name</b>	Fruitdale
<b>State</b>	South Dakota	<b>County</b>	Butte
<b>Location</b>	South end of Belle Fourche Dam, T. 9 N., R. 3 E., sec. 19		
<b>Reclamation Project</b>	Belle Fourche	<b>Army Corps Area</b>	7
<b>Date Established</b>	July 16, 1934	<b>Date Terminated</b>	May 18, 1942

### **CAMP HISTORY/ACTIVITIES**

The Belle Fourche Project in western South Dakota became the location for Camp Fruitdale, BR-2. Authorized on May 10, 1904, the Belle Fourche Project irrigates some 57,000 acres in the general area of Newell, Vale, and Nisland, South Dakota, along the valley of the Belle Fourche River. The largest project feature is Belle Fourche Dam, originally known as Orman Dam. The south end of this massive earthfill storage dam was the site selected for Camp BR-2.

Camp BR-2 belonged among the first nine CCC camps allotted to Reclamation. Originally, it was designated Camp DBR-2, indicating its authorization as a drought relief camp. These camps were part of the CCC program, but were confined to States that suffered severely from drought and were financed by drought relief funds. Camp BR-2 operated continuously from its establishment until it closed in May 1942.

In July 1934, the CCC assigned Company 2750 to the Belle Fourche Project. Shortly thereafter, the first enrollees arrived at the site of Camp BR-2, where they initially lived in tents. Preparations began immediately for establishing permanent quarters. Within about 60 days, a force of carpenters and helpers had erected 21 buildings on a broad, grassy terrace below the south end of Belle Fourche Dam. The buildings were arranged in a semicircle around an open courtyard, with a flagpole in the middle. Modern conveniences included electric lights, running water, and showers. Eight barracks housed 25 men each. Initially, at least, the enrollees consisted mostly of South Dakota farm boys. A civilian camp superintendent, seven foremen, a mechanic, and the project director made up the technical staff.

The principal work objective of Camp BR-2 enrollees consisted of rehabilitating the irrigation system on the Belle Fourche Project. By then, the project had been in operation for almost 25 years, and many features needed repair or replacement. A plant for the construction of precast concrete pipe was built at the Belle Fourche Project headquarters in Newell, South Dakota. There, the CCC undertook the fabrication of concrete pipes of assorted sizes and lengths to replace deteriorated or deficient metal and wooden irrigation structures. Enrollees accomplished this valuable activity when field conditions were unsuitable for other jobs.

Manufacture of concrete pipe began on September 28, 1935. Some of the siphons completed by the CCC forces included the 3,200-foot-long North Canal Siphon, the 950-foot-long Dry Creek Siphon, and the 290-foot-long Stinkingwater Siphon. In 1939, enrollees constructed the concrete Cottonwood Flume across the South Canal, and, in 1940 and 1941, they rerouted two sections of the Indian Creek Lateral, one through a 408-foot-long concrete pipeline, the other through a 650-foot-long concrete pipeline. CCC crews replaced a total of 1,281 old wooden and unserviceable water control structures with concrete ones of more modern design. These included drops, chutes, culverts, checks, and turnouts. CCC youths also lined a total of 14,962 square yards of waterways with concrete and cleared hundreds of miles of canals and laterals of weeds and other vegetation.

### **Camp BR-2, Camp History/Activities (continued)**

Additional work completed by the CCC consisted of improvements at Belle Fourche Dam. The enrollees resurfaced the top of the structure, placed riprap at conduit outlets, replaced concrete in the spillway chute, reconstructed the weir at the outlet works, and installed experimental wells. Crews also built recreational facilities at the dam and landscaped park grounds along the shore. Other endeavors included protecting canal banks with rock and brush riprap; constructing fences along Government rights-of-way; constructing ditchriders' operating roads; leveling spoil banks along the canals, laterals, and drains; and painting flumes.

Enrollees conducted a variety of activities intended to teach farmers about more successful cultivation practices. The CCC planted demonstration plots of strawberry clover, a valuable pasture crop that grows in seeped ground with a high alkaline content. Another educational effort consisted of planting brome grass along sections of ditch banks to keep weeds down and add valuable pasture on otherwise wasted space. The CCC conducted noxious weed eradication experiments at test plots using blades and chemicals. The camp also undertook a windbreak planting program. CCC crews planted trees raised by the Soil Conservation Service on farmers' property free of charge. The variety of species available included green ash, honey locust, hackberry, wild plum, and Siberian pea.

Aside from their work on the Belle Fourche Project, CCC enrollees assisted with various community improvements. They lined the swimming pool at Newell, installed and leveled runways at the Newell airport, improved the irrigation system and leveled the athletic field at the Newell school grounds, and relaid the water supply pipeline at the county fairgrounds.

After work hours, enrollees participated in a variety of social activities or sports such as baseball or basketball. Oftentimes, "full truck loads" of enrollees drove to nearby towns during free time to attend picture shows or other forms of entertainment.

The normal capacity of Camp BR-2 was 200 men.

### **CAMP DESCRIPTION (number/type of buildings)**

The buildings at the Belle Fourche CCC camp consisted of the permanent rigid type and were made from lumber purchased locally.

In July 1934, camp construction began on nine barracks (20 feet by 60 feet), a garage, mess hall, hospital, recreation hall, bath house, headquarters buildings, officers' quarters, and supply house. By November 1934, a total of 22 buildings had been erected. An artesian well drilled at the south end of the dam furnished water for the camp.

### **DISPOSITION/CURRENT STATUS**

On November 19, 1942, the director of the CCC authorized the War Department to transfer Camp BR-2 to the Bureau of Reclamation. In a March 29, 1944, memo to Reclamation Commissioner Harry Bashore on the status of former CCC camps, Avis Dyson noted that Camp BR-2 was in the custody of Reclamation's operation and maintenance organization. A few buildings had been removed, but the balance remained intact. Between 1944 and 1946, the War Department assumed control of the camp and used it to house German prisoners of war (POW) captured in 1943 in North Africa and Anzio, Italy, and in 1944 at Normandy. The German soldiers provided labor to local farmers.

### **Camp BR-2, Disposition/Current Status (continued)**

After 1946, all of the buildings disappeared over time, due to neglect, demolition, or, possibly, relocation. In November 1999, the site of BR-2 was recorded by Cynthia Kordecki, Jenny Bales, and Warren Miller of Anthropology Research at the University of North Dakota. At the time, the surveyors identified and mapped 27 features including foundation remains from several former structures and the only standing structure, an incinerator.

In June 2002, Reclamation, in cooperation with the South Dakota National Guard, developed a permanent interpretive display at the south end of the former camp. A series of panels mounted on boulders tell the history of the construction of the reservoir and the CCC/POW camp.

### **SOURCES**

"CCC Camp Conducts Demonstrational Plots—Windbreak Planting is Aided," *Belle Fourche Bee*, May 25, 1939.

"CCC Camp Construction Work Started," *Belle Fourche Bee*, July 27, 1934.

Civilian Conservation Corps, Office of the Director, "A Report Covering the Activities of the CCC Camps Assigned to Reclamation Projects in Fourteen Western States, August 1934-May 31, 1937," Box 180, Entry 7, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

F. C. Youngblutt, "Large Siphons of Belle Fourche Project," draft article, February 2, 1939, Box 36, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

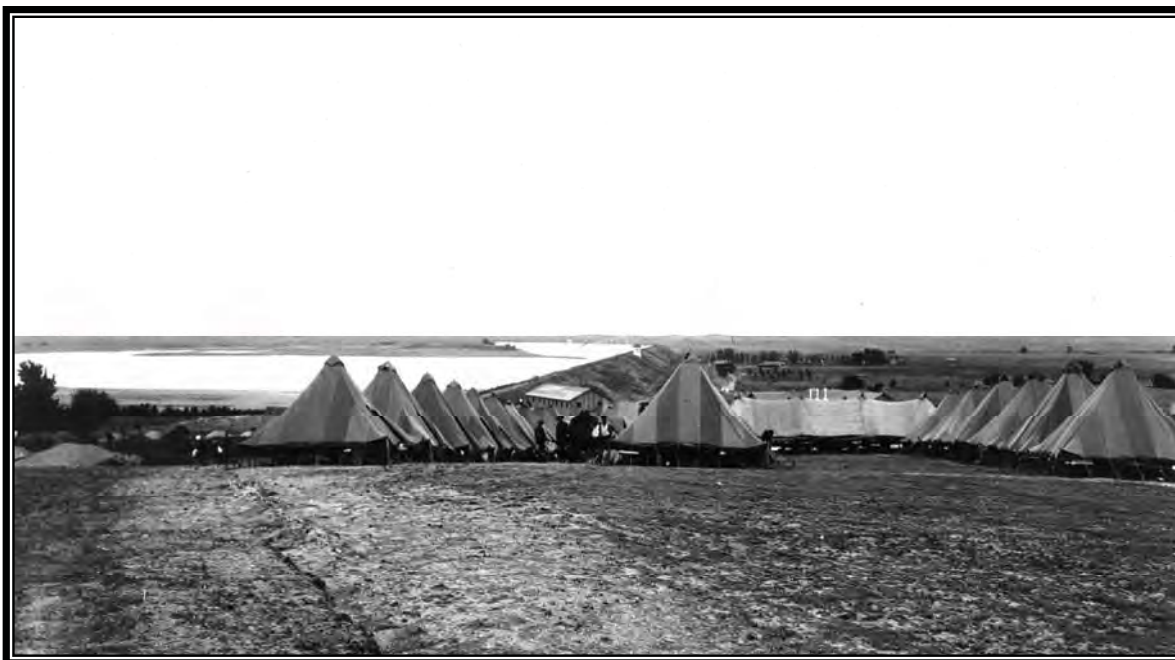
Mary McCormick and Cynthia Kordecki, *Belle Fourche Irrigation Project, 1999-2001 Cultural Resources Inventory and Evaluation*, Grand Forks, North Dakota: Anthropology Research, Department of Anthropology, University of North Dakota, September 2002.

Reclamation *Annual Project Histories, Belle Fourche Project*, 1934 through 1942, Boxes 22, 23, and 24, Entry 10, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

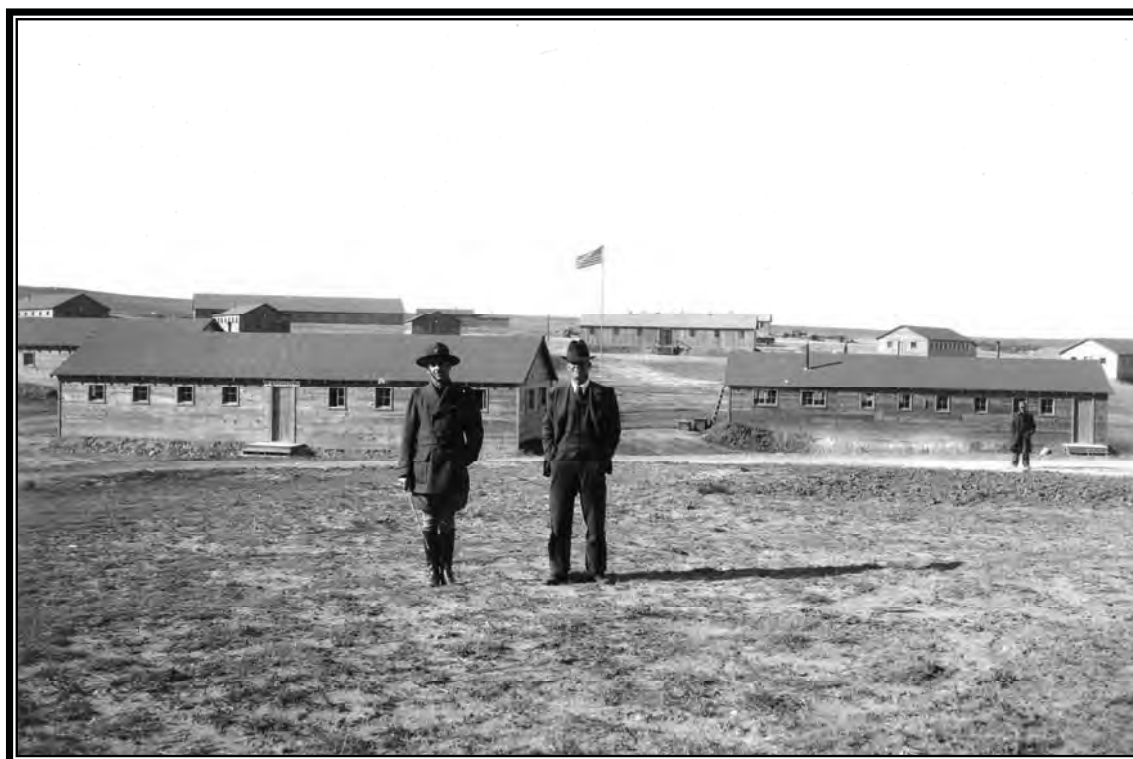
Reclamation, General Records of CCC Activities, Boxes 13, 36, 47, 48, and 81, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

**Recorded by: Christine Pfaff, Bureau of Reclamation, Denver, 2009**



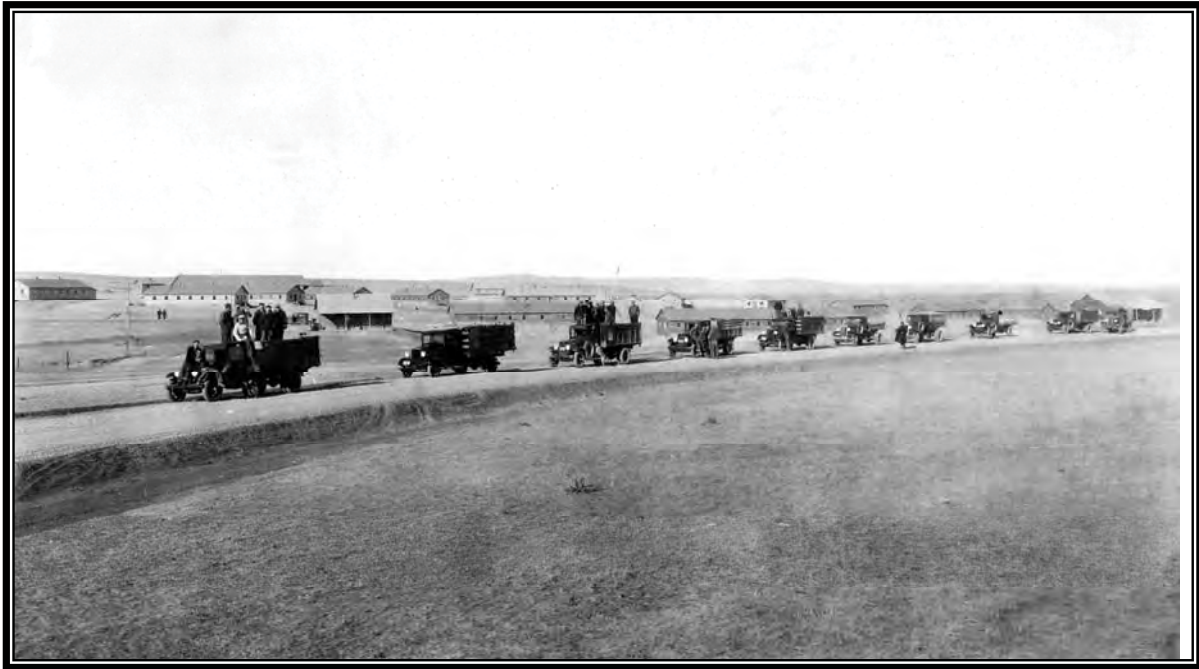


Camp BR-2: Belle Fourche Project, CCC tent camp at Belle Fourche Dam, August 1934 (Box 22, Entry 10, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-2: Belle Fourche Project, CCC camp, Lt. H.E. Hennig, camp commander, and H.G. Gray, camp superintendent, in foreground, October 1934 (Box 22, Entry 10, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).





Camp BR-2: Belle Fourche Project, transportation equipment leaving camp, April 1935 (Box 22, Entry 10, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-2: Belle Fourche Project, Company No. 2750 in front of mess hall, February 1935 (Box 22, Entry 10, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



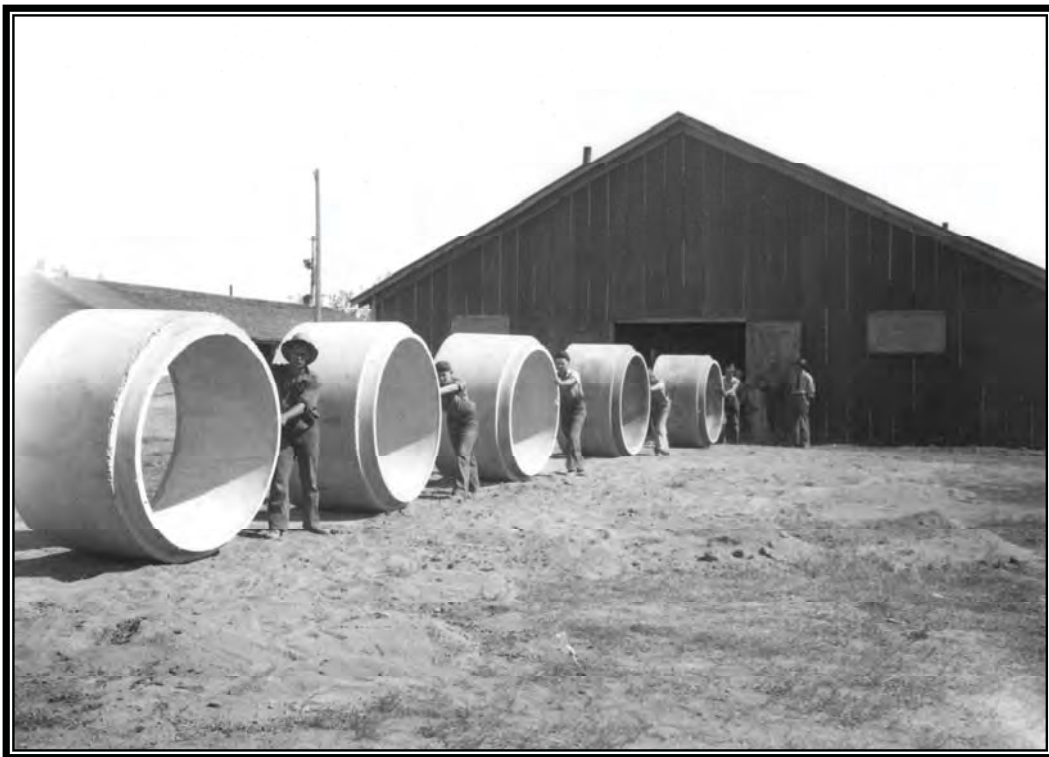
Camp BR-2: Belle Fourche Project, installing North Canal Siphon, June 23, 1936 (Box 23, Entry 10, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-2: Belle Fourche Project, form work for check reservoir drop, November 19, 1936 (Box 23, Entry 10, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-2: Belle Fourche Project, new check outlet-reservoir drop, December 15, 1936 (Box 23, Entry 10, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-2: Belle Fourche Project, completed 60-inch pipe being rolled out of plant, 1940 (Box 23, Entry 10, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).





Camp BR-2: Belle Fourche Project, repairing revetment, Belle Fourche Dam, 1940  
(Box 23, Entry 10, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).

## BUREAU OF RECLAMATION CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS STUDY

<b>Camp Number</b>	<b>BR-3 and BR-82</b>	<b>Camp Name</b>	Carlsbad
<b>State</b>	New Mexico	<b>County</b>	Eddy
<b>Location</b>	2 miles west of Carlsbad on the Carlsbad-Roswell Highway BR-3: T. 21 S., R. 26 E., sec. 35; BR-82: adjacent to BR-3		
<b>Reclamation Project</b>	Carlsbad	<b>Army Corps Area</b>	8
<b>Date Established</b>	BR-3: September 1934 BR-82: July 12, 1938	<b>Date Terminated</b>	BR-3: May 20, 1942 BR-82: November 1, 1941

### CAMP HISTORY/ACTIVITIES

Two CCC camps, Camp Carlsbad BR-3 and BR-82, were established on the Carlsbad Project in southeastern New Mexico near the city of Carlsbad. In 1905, Reclamation purchased the existing irrigation system on the Pecos River from the Pecos Irrigation Company and began much-needed repairs. Reclamation rehabilitated McMillan Dam and rebuilt Avalon Dam, a pre-Reclamation dam that was largely destroyed during a Pecos River flood in 1904. Later, Reclamation built Sumner Dam, originally called Alamogordo Dam, in 1936-37, and a drainage and distribution system that irrigates about 25,000 acres of land. Much more recently, Brantley Dam replaced McMillan Dam, which was determined to be unsafe. After completion of the new dam, Reclamation drained McMillan Reservoir and breached McMillan Dam in 1991.

Camp BR-3 was among the first nine CCC camps allotted to Reclamation, and it remained open almost until the termination of the CCC program. The camp was originally called Camp DBR-3, which designated it as a drought relief camp. These were identical to regular CCC camps but were confined to States that had suffered severely from drought.

Camp construction began on July 29, 1934, and that Labor Day, 250 enrollees arrived from Fort Bliss, Texas. For the first month, they stayed in tents while the construction contractor, Gil N. Aims of Roswell, New Mexico, worked on the kitchen, bath house, and latrine. Initially, consideration was given to maintaining tents as sleeping quarters year round on account of the mild winters, but ultimately wood barracks were constructed instead. A gas main and electric line were brought into the camp, and a well was drilled to provide water.

On September 10, 1934, enrollees started project work, which for the first month consisted of hand labor. The young men made repairs to the spillway tunnels at Lake Avalon, cleaned laterals, and constructed a pipeline for the camp water supply. By October, the camp had acquired a number of trucks, and work shifted to repairing features damaged by floods and reconstructing other features to afford greater protection in the event of future floods.

Initially, the main focus of work for Camp BR-3 enrollees was McMillan Reservoir, an important storage unit of the Carlsbad Project. The reservoir had been built over a gypsum formation and began to leak badly after its completion. By 1934, the leaks had increased significantly, and coupled with deposits of silt in the reservoir, the supply of irrigation water had seriously diminished. Engineering surveys revealed that an extension and reconstruction of the East Embankment of the reservoir would resolve the leaks.

In October 1934, the CCC began building the East Embankment extension, which consisted of a new dam 2,200 feet long and 21 feet high. Enrollees completed the labor intensive work in October 1935.

### **Camps BR-3 and BR-82, Camp History/Activities (continued)**

They quarried the rock (stratified limestone) by hand, without the use of explosives, and hauled it in dump trucks to the dam, an average distance of 2 miles. Enrollees hand-laid rocks used as riprap on the upstream face of the dam. The extension, together with the reconstruction of the old East Embankment, involved the placement of 58,230 cubic yards of earth fill and 10,270 cubic yards of rockfill and riprap.

In a November 1934 draft article for *The Reclamation Era*, the author described the first company of enrollees at Carlsbad as follows: "Many of the men are inexperienced, but considering their extreme youth, many of the enrollees have shown marked interest and a willingness to learn, and their morale and efficiency have steadily improved." On May 15, 1935, the initial group of enrollees was transferred to Wyoming and replaced by a company comprised of veterans who finished the McMillan Reservoir improvements.

In mid-November 1935, CCC enrollees began overhauling the dam and spillways at Avalon Reservoir. The improvements were intended to increase the safety factor of these features in the event of floodflows. The CCC raised the main dam 6 feet in height by constructing a rock masonry wall on the upstream face and earthfill and rockfill on the downstream face. Spillway No. 2 channel was improved by straightening it, and Spillway No. 3 was protected by a rock masonry crest. By July 1936 the dam and spillway enhancements were 90 percent complete.

Other work undertaken during this same time included clearing the main canal of growth along its banks and eliminating rodents. A crew of 12 men under a foreman started the latter task in November 1935. During February 1936, the CCC youths prepared ground for a tree nursery and, the next month, planted about 10,500 seedlings, mostly of Chinese elms. Once large enough for transplanting, the trees were distributed to owners of lands under the project. Apparently, the work completed by the CCC was well received by the local citizens; a newspaper article published on June 28, 1936, reported that "The camp has blended in and become a part of the community. Never has a word of adverse criticism been heard" (*Daily Current-Argus* 1936).

Between May 31 and June 10, 1937, rising floodwaters of the Pecos River threatened McMillan Dam with failure. During the peak of the flood, on May 31, a serious crack developed in the dam, and water started pouring from the leak. CCC enrollees patrolling the dam quickly blocked the leak with sandbags. Thereafter, all CCC enrollees were directed to emergency flood protection work there. Crews of 22 to 24 CCC men were on constant duty at the dam until June 3, when reports of further flood water coming down the valley required the assistance of additional CCC men from nearby U.S. Forest Service and Division of Grazing camps. Men from all three camps worked continuously in shifts from the morning of June 4 through the morning of June 6, placing sandbags on the reservoir face of the dam where leaks might occur at high water. As a result of the emergency work of the CCC enrollees, the dam withstood the pounding floodwaters, and the city of Carlsbad, with the surrounding irrigated valley, was saved from damage.

Following the flooding, Camp BR-3 enrollees were later directed to rehabilitate both McMillan and Avalon dams. J.R. Yates, superintendent of Camps BR-3 and, later, BR-82 as well, had immediate charge of the CCC forces involved in the project. Actual work on the major reconstruction of McMillan Dam began in November 1937. CCC crews removed the top 11 feet of the dam and replaced it with compacted earthfill, raising the crest to a new structural height of 57 feet. Using heavy-duty trucks, the enrollees hauled rock riprap from a quarry about 1 ½ miles away and dumped it on the upstream face of the embankment. They then spread the rocks into place. As part of the construction, the CCC also added

### **Camps BR-3 and BR-82, Camp History/Activities (continued)**

a 2-foot-wide sand and gravel filter against the upper 12 feet of the dam's original hand-laid stone wall. On the downstream toe of the dam, crews installed 1,350 feet of drainage tile.

Other work at McMillan Dam included improvements to the headgate structure, outlet channel, and Spillway No. 2. Immediately below the headgates, a large cavity had formed in the outlet channel due to water releases through the gates. A considerable amount of the eroded material had washed down further into the channel. CCC crews were tasked with reconstructing this channel. The work involved excavating and regrading the channel, backfilling the cavity with compacted rock and gravel, and pouring a reinforced concrete apron, 15 inches thick, on the channel floor for a distance of 100 feet below the headgates. The CCC also built rock masonry retaining walls near the headgates, which served not only a safety function but also improved the appearance of the gate structure.

Having nearly completed the rehabilitation of McMillan Dam by the end of March 1938, the CCC forces next made repairs to Spillway No. 2. During the floods, a large hole had washed out immediately below the lower part of the spillway. The repairs involved excavating all of the loose rock from the cavity and building a rock masonry and concrete protective wall along the spillway.

From January 1938 to March 1938, CCC forces and equipment were also employed on improving and widening Spillway Channel No. 2 at Avalon Dam. Enrollees excavated rock and gravel that had been deposited in the channel, poured a concrete floor in the upper end of the channel to prevent erosion, and built a rock wall on the east side of the spillway to prevent erosion of that side of the channel.

Upon completion of the rehabilitation of both dams, the following was reported: "A great deal of interest and enthusiasm was maintained by the CCC boys throughout the reconstruction of the McMillan Dam and the enlargement of the spillway channel at the Avalon Dam. The men were given an opportunity to participate in major construction jobs and were able to observe modern construction practices at close range. Many of the boys received excellent training in the handling of both light and heavy construction equipment." (*The Reclamation Era* 1939). As a result of the experience gained, several enrollees found jobs with private contractors shortly after the work was finished.

During fiscal year 1939, a second CCC camp, BR-82, was established on the Carlsbad Project adjacent to Camp BR-3. The original occupants of the new camp, members of Company No. 320, arrived on July 12, 1938. That same year, some of the enrollees were stationed at Alamogordo Dam, where they constructed buildings for a side camp and started making improvements for recreational use of the reservoir area. Crews eventually planted over 18,000 trees, installed fencing, and laid a water line. Enrollees at the main camp were primarily occupied lining canals and laterals on the project with concrete and, in some instances, with rubble masonry. At Avalon Dam, landscaping was installed in the area of the dam tender's house. Approved work included terracing a steep and rocky slope and planting it with grass, building a stone wall at the side and rear of the caretaker's house, dismantling an old warehouse and building a new one, and constructing a 2.35-mile-long truck trail road.

During fiscal year 1940, CCC enrollees continued to be engaged in numerous activities. At Alamogordo Dam, the men completed more recreational enhancements and conducted some work to improve the spillway channel below the dam. Flood control operations were completed at Hackberry Draw, which included enlarging the existing embankment and channel to allow for greater flows. CCC enrollees continued the work of lining project canals and laterals with concrete or rock. Other

### **Camps BR-3 and BR-82, Camp History/Activities (continued)**

CCC accomplishments included the construction of 153 water control structures (primarily concrete), eradication of rodents and other predators, and the installation of 36 miles of ditchriders' roads. As at other camps, CCC enrollees had the opportunity to participate in educational programs and were given extensive safety training.

Camp BR-82 closed on November 1, 1941, and the enrollees, who belonged to Company No. 3820, transferred to Camp BR-3. About 25 men from the main camp were assigned to continue work at Alamogordo Dam, where they built picnic tables and fireplaces in the recreational area and continued fencing along the reservoir. The enrollees were quartered at Soil Conservation Service Camp 23-N. Camp BR-3, then occupied by Company No. 850, shut down on May 20, 1942.

### **CAMP DESCRIPTION (number/type of buildings)**

Camp BR-3 was built on 10 acres of Government land and 30 acres of private land. Apparently, Camp BR-82 was constructed adjacent to Camp BR-3. Included in the temporary occupancy permit issued to the Air Forces Advanced Flying School at the Carlsbad Air Base in June 1942 (see "Disposition/Current Status") is a list of 57 frame portable and frame rigid buildings and permanent fixtures on the property. Among the buildings are 10 barracks (3 were frame portable [20 feet by 150 feet]; 6 were frame rigid [20 feet by 94 feet]; and 1 was frame rigid (20 feet by 56 feet)), a recreation hall, a mess hall, an infirmary, an auditorium, 2 educational buildings, an officers' quarters, an army office, 2 bath houses, 2 latrines, a workshop, a camp exchange, a barber shop, a technical main shop, a projectory room, and a number of other smaller buildings.

### **DISPOSITION/CURRENT STATUS**

Following the closure of both camps, a temporary occupancy permit was issued to the Air Forces Advanced Flying School at Carlsbad Air Force Base. On September 22, 1942, the camps were turned over to the Army Air Base and remained under its jurisdiction at least until the end of March 1944. At that time, about one-third of the buildings had been removed and the remaining buildings were vacant. Final disposition is unknown.

### **SOURCES**

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"CCC and Emergency Work," *The Reclamation Era* 27 (August 1937), 188-190.

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CCC, Office of the Director, "A Report Covering the Activities of Civilian Conservation Corps Camps Assigned to Reclamation Projects in 14 Western States, August 1934 - May 31, 1937," for release to afternoon papers, July 3, 1937, Box 180, Entry 7, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

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### **Camps BR-3 and BR-82, Sources (continued)**

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M. Hufstetler and L. Johnson, Renewable Technologies, Inc., Carlsbad Irrigation District, National Register of Historic Places registration form, 1991.

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Reclamation, Records of the Supervising Engineer in Charge of Emergency Conservation Work, Box 4, Entry 21, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

Reclamation, Work Progress Reports, Boxes 2 and 15, Entry 26, National Archives, Denver.

“Veterans’ Help Keeps Project in Good Shape,” *Daily Current-Argus*, June 28, 1936.

**Recorded by: Christine Pfaff, Bureau of Reclamation, Denver, 2009**



Camps BR-3 and BR-82: Carlsbad Project, view of CCC camp at Alamagordo Dam, December 20, 1940 (Box 1, Entry 31, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).





Camps BR-3 and BR-82: Carlsbad Project, canal lining project, April 30, 1940 (Box 1, Entry 31, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camps BR-3 and BR-82: Carlsbad Project, canal lining project, April 30, 1940 (Box 1, Entry 31, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camps BR-3 and BR-82: Carlsbad Project, canal rehabilitation, September 17, 1940 (Box 1, Entry 31, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camps BR-3 and BR-82: Carlsbad Project, terraces at dam tender's quarters, Avalon Dam, December 10, 1940 (Box 1, Entry 31, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).





Camps BR-3 and BR-82: Carlsbad Project, dam tender's quarters at Avalon Dam, December 10, 1940 (Box 1, Entry 31, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).

## BUREAU OF RECLAMATION CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS STUDY

<b>Camp Number</b>	<b>BR-4</b>	<b>Camp Name</b>	Ysleta
<b>State</b>	Texas	<b>County</b>	El Paso
<b>Location</b>	Two miles northeast of Ysleta on a mesa		
<b>Reclamation Project</b>	Rio Grande	<b>Army Corps Area</b>	8
<b>Date Established</b>	August 1934	<b>Date Terminated</b>	November 30, 1941
<b>CAMP HISTORY/ACTIVITIES</b>			
<p>Camp Ysleta, BR-4, was among the first nine CCC camps allotted to the Bureau of Reclamation, and the first of four Reclamation camps assigned to the Rio Grande Project. The other three camps were <i>BR-8, BR-39, and BR-54</i>.</p> <p>Authorized by the Secretary of the Interior on December 2, 1905, the Rio Grande Project furnishes irrigation water to over 178,000 acres of land in the Rio Grande Valley in south-central New Mexico and west Texas. About 60 percent of the lands receiving water are in New Mexico; 40 percent are in Texas. Storage for the project is provided in Elephant Butte and Caballo reservoirs, both in New Mexico. Other features include 6 diversion dams, 139 miles of canals, 457 miles of laterals, 465 miles of drains, and a hydroelectric powerplant.</p> <p>Originally, Camp BR-4 was designated as Camp DBR-4, indicating its status as a drought relief camp. These were part of the CCC program, but were confined to States that had suffered severely from the drought and were financed by drought relief funds. Altogether, there were six DBR camps among the first nine Reclamation camps.</p> <p>The first enrollees assigned to Camp BR-4 belonged to Company No. 1854, which was composed of 230 men. Although construction of the camp was not completed until September 22, 1934, enrollees began project work in August as soon as trucks for their use arrived on site. The primary focus of Camp BR-4 throughout its existence consisted of improvements to the irrigation and drainage system in the El Paso Valley and the Texas part of the Mesilla Valley.</p> <p>The first work undertaken by CCC enrollees involved building up and surfacing the banks of a section of the Franklin Canal that ran through the eastern part of El Paso, where they had been worn away by pedestrian and auto traffic. A concrete core was placed in the canal banks to prevent breaks by gophers. Initial work by the CCC also included construction of new buildings at the Reclamation yard at Ysleta. These buildings consisted of a division office and storehouse, machine shop, foundry, carpenter shop, cement house, oil house, and two lumber sheds and creosoting vat, all enclosed by a stone fence. Except for the lumber sheds and carpenter shop, all of the buildings were constructed of adobe with stucco finish inside. Reclamation contributed about \$20,000 towards this endeavor for skilled labor and materials.</p> <p>Improvements to the Franklin Canal continued over a number of years. Considerable effort went into planning and building an operating road on the banks of the canal, which extended for over 30 miles. This involved raising and surfacing sandy places, grading and widening other areas, and installing concrete cores along some stretches.</p> <p>Along other canals and laterals, enrollees replaced many of the old deteriorating timber farm turnouts with reinforced concrete boxes equipped with cast iron screw lift gates. Reclamation paid for the gates</p>			

**Camp BR-4, Camp History/Activities (continued)**

from operation and maintenance funds; the camp furnished all other material and labor. To protect canal banks below check structures, CCC crews placed concrete along the banks. Other improvements to the irrigation system included lining laterals with concrete; replacing wooden checks with concrete ones; replacing open flumes with culverts; placing riprap on eroded canal and lateral banks; and grading, surfacing, and, in some cases, widening canal and lateral banks to create miles of operating roads, all of which greatly facilitated maintenance activities. The Tornillo Canal, and the Jornada, Salatral, and Juan d'Herrera Laterals, were among features subject to upgrades that were mentioned in various reports. CCC enrollees also enlarged and extended the Texas Lateral and constructed the 2-mile-long Vinton Cutoff Lateral.

Pest control and rodent trapping was an important project for the camp throughout its existence. A crew for exterminating rodents was established; by the end of FY 1939, approximately 90,000 gophers had been trapped and 100,000 poisoned. The CCC also conducted considerable experimental work to control the spread of noxious weeds. Different methods tried for the elimination of bindweed included chopping plants out by hand, spraying them with oil, and spraying them with oil and then burning them. Enrollees treated Johnson grass, willows, and tules with calcium chlorate with varying degrees of success. Another attempt to control noxious weeds consisted of fencing rights-of-way for pasturing of sheep on canal and lateral banks. A second part of the weed eradication program consisted of planting desirable seeds, such as brome grass and strawberry clover, to determine their ability to establish themselves and crowd out undesirable weeds.

During the last 2 years of the camp's existence, CCC enrollees assisted Reclamation on the Riverside Canal Extension by hauling material to raise low sections of the canal banks to proper grade, and by moving the old river levee, which ran parallel and adjacent to the canal, to form one canal bank. Crews also built some minor structures including timber farm bridges, turnouts, and a check and flume crossing, and worked on the Hansen Feeder Canal.

In October 1937, Company No. 1854 left Camp BR-4 and Company No. 2872, consisting of black enrollees, arrived from Fort Bliss. They continued to occupy the camp until it closed on November 30, 1941.

**CAMP DESCRIPTION (number/type of buildings)**

Buildings were constructed at Camp BR-4 starting in July 1934. Land for the camp was leased from a private property owner. A total of 32 buildings were enumerated on a 1943 disposal report. They included six frame barracks (five rigid and one portable), a school building (frame, rigid), infirmary (frame, rigid), mess hall (frame, rigid), kitchen (frame, rigid), officers' quarters (frame, rigid), technical services quarters (frame, rigid), headquarters (frame, rigid), supply room (frame, rigid) recreation hall (frame, rigid), latrine (frame, rigid), bath house (frame, rigid), garage (frame, rigid), pump house (frame, rigid), carpenter shop (frame, rigid), oil house (frame, rigid), mechanic shop (frame, rigid), technical services office (frame, rigid), technical carpenter shop (frame, rigid), feed room (frame, rigid), watch tower (masonry), oil house (rock, rigid), and paint house (frame, rigid). In addition, the camp included a permanent metal water storage tank.

### **Camp BR-4 (continued)**

<b>DISPOSITION/CURRENT STATUS</b>
On March 15, 1942, Camp BR-4 was transferred from Reclamation to the CCC for occupation by a National Park Service Company to work on a defense project at Ft. Bliss Military Reservation in Texas.
<b>SOURCES</b>
Reclamation, <i>Annual Project Histories, Rio Grande Project</i> , 1936 through 1941, Boxes 143 and 144, Engineering and Research Center Project Histories, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.
Reclamation, General Records of CCC Activities, Boxes 12, 13, 36, 48, and 49, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.
Reclamation, Work Progress Reports, Box 2, Entry 26, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.
<b>Recorded by: Christine Pfaff, Bureau of Reclamation, Denver, 2009</b>

## BUREAU OF RECLAMATION CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS STUDY

<b>Camp Number</b>	<b>BR-5</b>	<b>Camp Name</b>	Currant Creek
<b>State</b>	Utah	<b>County</b>	Wasatch
<b>Location</b>	23 miles east of Heber, Utah, on Currant Creek		
<b>Reclamation Project</b>	Strawberry Valley	<b>Army Corps Area</b>	9
<b>Date Established</b>	July 1934	<b>Date Terminated</b>	Fall 1937

### **CAMP HISTORY/ACTIVITIES**

The Strawberry Valley Project in central Utah experienced a number of serious water shortages in the Dust Bowl years. This early Reclamation project, authorized in 1905, supplies water to about 45,000 acres around Spanish Fork. The largest project component consists of Strawberry Valley Dam, located on the Strawberry River about 29 miles southeast of Provo, Utah. The dam stores water in Strawberry Valley Reservoir.

To offset the depletion of project water supplies, in 1934 the CCC assigned Camp Currant Creek, Camp BR-5, to the Strawberry Valley Project to construct the 5-mile-long Currant Creek Feeder Canal to bring additional water into Strawberry Valley Reservoir from the Green River Watershed. Originally, the camp was designated DBR-5, indicating its establishment as a drought relief camp. These camps were part of the CCC program, but were confined to States that suffered severely from drought and were financed by drought relief funds.

Camp BR-5 was located on the western edge of the Uinta Basin 23 miles east of Heber, Utah, on the headwaters of Currant Creek, a tributary of the Duchesne River. Because of the camp's high elevation, it was only occupied during the summers; in winter, camp enrollees moved to *Camp BR-11*, located at a lower elevation at Bridgeland, Utah, on the Moon Lake Project.

CCC enrollees built the feeder canal, which diverts water from Currant Creek at an elevation of 9,000 feet, during the summers of 1934, 1935, and 1936. The canal traverses a rather steep, heavily wooded mountainside, which made construction difficult. During the first summer, the entire camp cut heavy timber and cleared the canal right-of-way for the entire distance of 5 miles, and excavated a small amount of the canal. Most of the latter work, and the building of two rock emergency spillways and a small diversion dam, were accomplished during the summers of 1935 and 1936 by a small stub camp from *Camp BR-12*. The greater part of the excavation, which amounted to 95,000 cubic yards, was strenuous and necessitated the use of heavy equipment such as scarifier machines, scrapers, and tractors. CCC enrollees also used the equipment to trim the slopes of the canal banks, remove rocks, and clear the construction site. At the closing of the stub camp on October 10, 1936, the canal was readied for operation during the season of 1937.

The supervisory and facilitating personnel consisted of one camp superintendent, one general foreman, one to two operating foremen, two to four caterpillar operators, one mechanic-blacksmith, and, occasionally, a few skilled laborers. Other personnel such as subforemen, warehouse men, truck drivers, safety men, and clerks were recruited from the enrollees.

Despite the remote locality of the camp, the enrollees exhibited a "fine cooperative spirit and high morale" (Civilian Conservation Corps 1937). Many showed great interest in the operation of the heavy equipment and in the construction methods. A large number received training in skilled and semi-skilled work.

## Camp BR-5 (continued)

<b>CAMP DESCRIPTION (number/type of buildings)</b>
This camp was of the summer tent type and, in addition to 36 tent floors, consisted of a mess hall (116-foot by 20-foot by 35-foot wing), wash house (20 feet by 60 feet), two latrines, two oil and gas sheds, a cooler building (10 feet by 14 feet), and a blacksmith shop.
<b>DISPOSITION/CURRENT STATUS</b>
Following the abandonment of the camp in the fall of 1937, Reclamation desired to salvage the camp buildings for use elsewhere. In a letter dated March 12, 1938, R. W. Williams, Acting Reclamation Commissioner, wrote to Robert Fechner, director of the CCC, requesting permission to reuse materials from BR-5 at <i>Camp BR-64</i> in Heber and, possibly, at a CCC summer side camp at an unnamed Reclamation reservoir in Utah. On March 16, 1938, Fechner approved the salvaging of Camp BR-5 by Reclamation for CCC use elsewhere.
<b>SOURCES</b>
Civilian Conservation Corps, Office of the Director, "A Report Covering the Activities of Civilian Conservation Corps Camps Assigned to Reclamation Projects in Fourteen Western States, August 1934-May 31, 1937," July 1937, Box 180, Entry 7, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.  Reclamation, General Records of CCC Activities, Boxes 11, 36, and 48, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.  <b>Recorded by: Christine Pfaff, Bureau of Reclamation, Denver, 2009</b>

## BUREAU OF RECLAMATION CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS STUDY

<b>Camp Number</b>	<b>BR-6</b>	<b>Camp Name</b>	Ephraim
<b>State</b>	Utah	<b>County</b>	Sanpete
<b>Location</b>	Twin Springs, 19 miles east of Ephraim, Utah		
<b>Reclamation Project</b>	Sanpete	<b>Army Corps Area</b>	9
<b>Date Established</b>	July 1934	<b>Date Terminated</b>	Fall 1937
<b>CAMP HISTORY/ACTIVITIES</b>			
<p>Camp Ephraim, BR-6, was one of the first nine CCC camps allotted to the Bureau of Reclamation. Originally, the camp was designated DBR-6, indicating its establishment as a drought relief camp. These were identical in principle to regular Emergency Conservation Work (ECW) camps (renamed CCC camps) but were confined to States that had suffered severely from the drought. Reclamation's first nine CCC camps included six DBR camps among them.</p> <p>The Sanpete Project, to which Camp BR-6 was assigned, originated during the drought years of the 1930s. Authorized in 1935, the Reclamation project was designed to supply agricultural lands around Ephraim and Spring City with additional water. Reclamation contracted for the construction of the Ephraim and Spring City tunnels between 1935 and 1939 to divert surplus water from the eastern slope of the Wasatch Plateau in Central Utah to project lands on the western slope.</p> <p>Camp BR-6 was established in the summer of 1934 on the headwaters of Cottonwood Creek, a tributary of the San Rafael River. Located in the mountains of the Manti-La Sal National Forest at an elevation of 10,000 feet, the camp was first occupied by members of Company 1967 under the command of Captain L. E. Thompson. The work of the CCC forces consisted principally of constructing two small feeder canals, with an aggregate length of 3.5 miles, leading to the Ephraim Tunnel and two small feeder canals with an aggregate length of 2 miles leading to the Spring City Tunnel. The two tunnels were used for diverting the surplus waters of Cottonwood Creek to the Ephraim and Spring City Divisions of the Sanpete Project. The CCC forces also assisted in hauling concrete aggregates, cement, and timber for the tunnels over a rough mountain road from Ephraim and Spring City. Other CCC accomplishments included the construction of several small bridges and two small, masonry diversion dams.</p> <p>The supervisory and facilitating personnel at the camp consisted of one camp superintendent, one general foreman, one to two operating foremen, two to four caterpillar operators, one mechanic-blacksmith, and, occasionally, a few skilled laborers. Engineering services were provided where necessary by Reclamation engineers.</p> <p>Due to the location of Camp BR-6 at high elevation, it was occupied only during the summers. In winter, camp enrollees moved to <i>Camp BR-12</i> at a lower elevation at Huntsville, near Ogden, Utah.</p>			
<b>CAMP DESCRIPTION (number/type of buildings)</b>			
<p>Camp BR-6 was of the summer tent type. In addition to tents, the camp included a frame mess hall (150 feet by 20 feet), a frame pump house (8 feet by 10 feet), a frame wash house (20 feet by 40 feet), a frame latrine (10 feet by 24 feet), a screen and lathe cooler house (12 feet by 17 feet), and an officers' frame latrine (10 feet by 12 feet).</p>			

## Camp BR-6 (continued)

### DISPOSITION/CURRENT STATUS

After Camp BR-6 was abandoned in the fall of 1937, Reclamation desired to utilize the materials from the buildings to construct a CCC side camp east of Spring City, Utah, to house CCC enrollees for the construction of a feeder canal system for the Sanpete Project. CCC Director Robert Fechner approved salvage of the buildings by Reclamation on March 22, 1938. Apparently, the buildings were not dismantled in 1938, because a release form for them was signed in June 1939. On the form, the CCC liaison officer of the Ninth Corps Area recommended that all buildings be turned over to the Regional Forester, U.S. Department of Agriculture, in Ogden for CCC purposes. The form noted that “the camp buildings are hardly worth salvaging . . . and the buildings are no longer needed by this Bureau on the Sanpete Project (“Report on Disposition”).”

### SOURCES

Civilian Conservation Corps, “Report on Disposition of CCC Camp Structures,” Box 11, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

Kenneth Baldrige, “Nine Years of Achievement: The Civilian Conservation Corps in Utah,” Ph.D., Brigham Young University, May 1971.

Reclamation, General Correspondence, “Work Program for ECW Camps-Utah,” September 12, 1934, Box 183, Entry 7, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

Reclamation, General Records of CCC Activities, Boxes 11 and 36, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

Reclamation, Work Progress Report, Box 2, Entry 26, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

**Recorded by: Christine Pfaff, Bureau of Reclamation, Denver, 2009**



Camp BR:6: Sanpete Project, enrollees waiting for roll call before going to work, date unknown (Reclamation History Program photo database).



## BUREAU OF RECLAMATION CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS STUDY

<b>Camp Number</b>	<b>BR-7</b>	<b>Camp Name</b>	Deaver
<b>State</b>	Wyoming	<b>County</b>	Big Horn
<b>Location</b>	Deaver		
<b>Reclamation Project</b>	Shoshone	<b>Army Corps Area</b>	8
<b>Date Established</b>	August 1935	<b>Date Terminated</b>	July 1941
<b>CAMP HISTORY/ACTIVITIES</b>			
<p>Ready for occupancy in August 1935, Camp Deaver, BR-7, was the first of three CCC camps established on the Shoshone Project; the other two were <i>Camps BR-72</i> and <i>BR-87</i>. Located near Cody in northwestern Wyoming, the Shoshone Project provides irrigation water for about 89,000 acres of land. Key features of this early Reclamation endeavor include Buffalo Bill Dam and Reservoir, Shoshone and Heart Mountain Powerplants, and a network of canals and laterals. CCC forces assigned to the three camps on the project completed construction and maintenance work on the Frannie, Garland, Willwood, and Heart Mountain divisions.</p> <p>Enrollees at Camp BR-7 focused primarily on rehabilitating the irrigation and drainage system on the Frannie Division, although they also worked on the Frannie Canal system within the Garland Division and assisted <i>Camp BR-72</i> on the Willwood Division. Some of the items accomplished included clearing and cleaning canals, laterals, and open drains; replacing deteriorated wood water control structures and worn-out metal pipe culverts; controlling erosion below wasteways by placing rock riprap; installing dry rock paving in canals for erosion control; and constructing operating roads along canals and laterals. Among the larger improvements completed by Camp BR-7 enrollees was the replacement of part of Lateral W-114-F siphon that had been seriously damaged by alkaline soils.</p> <p>Camp BR-7 enrollees also reconstructed 22 miles of telephone line from Deaver to the various ditchriders' houses, placed stretches of bentonite lining in laterals to determine its merits for decreasing canal seepage, treated Government lands for the control of rodents and predatory animals, and conducted various weed control projects. Crews experimented with eradicating perennial weeds by clean cutting the roots on small blocks of canal, lateral, and drain ditch banks; planted brome grass on canal banks and demonstration plots of strawberry clover; and conducted seed control work on a portion of canal right-of-way by cutting and burning plants. The camp completed a survey of perennial weeds on both public and private lands in the Frannie Division.</p> <p>CCC enrollees from Camp BR-7 also provided emergency assistance in several cases. In 1937, men from the camp made repairs to the Alkali Creek chute, which washed out unexpectedly. In 1941, crews made emergency repairs to the Frannie Canal to prevent a threatened break. They also assisted in fire suppression work on Blackwater Creek in the Shoshone National Forest. A number of men, some of them CCC enrollees from another camp, lost their lives in the fire, and others suffered severe burns.</p> <p>More specifically, the accomplishments of the three camps assigned to the Shoshone Project included the construction of 25 vehicle bridges, both timber and concrete; over 6,800 yards of fencing; about 1,100 yards of guardrail; 330 yards of stone walls; 34 miles of telephone lines; 530 new water control structures; and 1 fish-rearing pond. Enrollees also cleared and cleaned 800,000 square yards of canals and laterals, lined 24,143 square yards of canals and laterals, planted 6,238 trees, and treated 32,879 acres for rodents.</p>			

### **Camp BR-7, Camp History/Activities (continued)**

The community reacted very favorably to the Shoshone Project CCC program. To publicize the CCC program, open houses were held at various times at the camps. In April 1937, more than 1,000 people visited Camp BR-7 during the fourth anniversary celebration of the CCC. That same year, it was reported that "Most of the enrollees have conducted themselves very satisfactorily in the various towns in which they spend their evenings and weekends and this has changed the attitude of many who were opposed to the establishment of CCC camps on the projects" (Windle 1937).

Oral history interviews conducted with several of the enrollees at Camp BR-7 provide a glimpse of their experiences. Travis Belue from Hilford, Texas, lied about his age to join the CCC at 16 to help his struggling family. Out of money and living in desperation, they survived on jack rabbits they caught. With the \$25 a month that Travis sent home every month, his parents were able to buy a small home. Travis arrived in Deaver on a troop train on August 8, 1935. The camp had just been built and the only water available came from the irrigation ditch. This changed once the piping was completed. Travis felt homesick the first year at camp and didn't venture out. By 1936, he joined his fellow CCC enrollees in excursions to town. On one such outing, he attended a dance in Cowley, Wyoming, where he met a girl who became his wife a year later (Gimmeson 2001).

Another enrollee, John Richards, described the use of heavy equipment to undertake canal repairs. Trucks, caterpillars, a road grader, and a ditcher for cleaning out ditches, made the work go much faster and easier. For building new concrete structures, enrollees shoveled by hand sand, gravel, and cement into a concrete mixer. The enrollees went up into the hills to find sandstone for riprapping canals. After laying the first stones at the bottom of the canal, enrollees stair stepped more of them up the sides. Other riprap was made by cutting willows into bundles and tying them with baling wire (Gimmeson 2001).

The camp closed on July 1, 1941, because the national defense program made it impossible to obtain enough enrollees to keep all CCC camps in operation. A large amount of work approved for Camp BR-7 remained incomplete when the camp shut down. The most urgent items were later finished by enrollees from *Camp BR-72*.

### **CAMP DESCRIPTION (number/type of buildings)**

Located on Federal lands, Camp BR-7 buildings were of the rigid type and included the following: five barracks (20 feet by 100 feet), one barrack (20 feet by 50 feet), one office and technical quarters (20 feet by 100 feet), one recreation hall (20 feet by 100 feet), one headquarters building (20 feet by 70 feet), one infirmary (20 feet by 30 feet), one latrine (10 feet by 20 feet), one bathhouse (20 feet by 40 feet), one mess hall and kitchen (20 feet by 110 feet), one educational building (20 feet by 80 feet), three garages (one 20 feet by 20 feet, and two 24 feet by 50 feet), and one oil house (6 feet by 8 feet).

### **DISPOSITION/CURRENT STATUS**

The rigid type buildings at Camp BR-7 were not suitable for dismantling and reuse elsewhere; therefore, the camp was transferred to Reclamation on November 19, 1942. On August 1, 1943, the Deaver Irrigation District obtained a lease for the camp. As of March 1944, it was still being used by the District, which expressed interest in purchasing it for operation and maintenance purposes.

### **Camp BR-7, Disposition/Current Status (continued)**

Within a few months, the status of the camp changed dramatically when about 110 German prisoners of war arrived there by train from a camp in Douglas, Wyoming. The prisoner's first task consisted of remodeling an armory building and barn in Lovell, Wyoming, for use as prisoner of war housing. As time went on, the prisoners helped the local farmers out, mainly in the beet fields. Army guards escorted the captives from converted Camp BR-7 to their work sites. After the war, the camp was subleased as housing for Mexican National workers for the season of 1947.

Today, the site of the CCC camp is apparently privately owned. Two of the original buildings still exist, one in its original location, another moved to a different property.

### **SOURCES**

Conversation with Susan Patterson, Deaver Irrigation District, Deaver, Wyoming, on March 3, 2009.

Johanna K. Gimmeson, *German POW Camp in Deaver, Wyoming*, pamphlet printed by Polecat Printery, Powell, Wyoming, 2001.

L. J. Windle, Regional Director, "Narrative Report on CCC for the Ninth Enrollment Period Ending September 30, 1937, BR Camp No. 7," 1937, Box 49, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

Reclamation, *Annual Project Histories, Shoshone Project*, 1938, 1939, 1940, 1941, 1942, 1943, Boxes 168 and 169, Engineering and Research Center Project Histories, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

Reclamation, General Records of CCC Activities, Boxes 12, 13, and 47 through 49, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

**Recorded by: Christine Pfaff, Bureau of Reclamation, Denver, 2009**



Camp BR-7: Shoshone Project, view of camp, date unknown (courtesy of Shoshone Irrigation District).



Camp BR-7: Shoshone Project, enrollees digging ditch for water supply line from Deaver Reservoir, August 28, 1936 (courtesy of Shoshone Irrigation District).



Camp BR-7: Shoshone Project, enrollees preparing joint in steel pipe for water supply from Deaver Reservoir, August 28, 1936 (courtesy of Shoshone Irrigation District).



Camp BR-7: Shoshone Project, enrollees working with dragline to widen Deaver Canal; note former width of canal, August 28, 1936 (courtesy of Shoshone Irrigation District).



Camp BR-7: Shoshone Project, completed concrete chute on lateral 114, Frannie Division; left chute is for flood water, June 19, 1940 (Box 1, Entry 31, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-7: Shoshone Project, Frannie Division, Lateral 209-F, Station 0 and 25, March 13, 1941 (Box 1, Entry 31, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).





Camp BR-7: Shoshone Project, Frannie Division, completed structure at station 0 and 25, Lateral 209-F, May 7, 1941 (Box 1, Entry 31, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-7: Shoshone Project, members of CCC Company No. 4822 in parade at Lovell, Wyoming (cooks in white), date unknown (Box 1, Entry 31, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).

## BUREAU OF RECLAMATION CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS STUDY

<b>Camp Number</b>	<b>BR-8 and BR-54</b>	<b>Camp Name</b>	Elephant Butte
<b>State</b>	New Mexico	<b>County</b>	Sierra
<b>Location</b>	Elephant Butte Reservoir		
<b>Reclamation Project</b>	Rio Grande	<b>Army Corps Area</b>	8
<b>Date Established</b>	BR-8: October 1934 BR-54: August 1935	<b>Date Terminated</b>	BR-8: August 1939 BR-54: May 1941

### **CAMP HISTORY/ACTIVITIES**

There were four CCC camps assigned to the Rio Grande Project: *Camps BR-4, BR-8, BR-39, and BR-54*. The Elephant Butte camps, BR-8 and BR-54, were located at Elephant Butte Dam, the headquarters for the storage division of the project, and, on account of the lake, also a popular recreation area for boating and fishing. A suitable work program for the enrollees was developed, which consisted mainly of improving infrastructure for the operation, maintenance, and administration of the dam and reservoir, and of upgrading the recreational facilities. Since the dam had been built primarily for irrigation storage, little regard had been given to recreation. No campgrounds existed, and facilities for day use were inadequate. Reclamation seized the opportunity to utilize CCC labor to remedy the recreational deficiencies.

Camp BR-8 was among the first nine camps assigned to the Bureau of Reclamation and was operated cooperatively with State Parks and the National Park Service (NPS). All CCC work was subject to the approval and inspection of the NPS. Construction of the 230-man camp began on September 17, 1934, and was completed on October 17, 1934. The camp's first occupants were members of Company No. 855, comprised of "Caucasian" veterans from Texas and New Mexico. They numbered about 200 men and consisted of junior enrollees and Local Experienced Men.

In association with construction of Elephant Butte Dam in 1910-11, Reclamation established a permanent Government headquarters complex that still existed in the 1930s. Located one mile east of the dam, the buildings provided an economic and convenient locale for the CCC camp. Electricity, water, and sewage systems were also already in place, although in poor condition.

Under the CCC program, a number of the old headquarters' buildings were refurbished. The young men converted the hospital to apartments. Initially, the administration building was used as a concession building, and then it was remodeled into a modern, 18-room hotel upon completion of a new concession building in 1938. A two-story hotel served as the company headquarters, recreation hall, reading room, canteen, classrooms, storerooms, and officers' and technicians' quarters. The mess hall originally retained its original use but later was converted to two apartments and a storeroom. The testing laboratory became the infirmary. Fourteen cottages provided housing close to the CCC camp for families of the company officers and supervising personnel.

New construction was limited to a bath house, latrine, mess hall extension, and group of barracks. Due to money thus saved, it was possible to build 22 cabin-type barracks to accommodate 6 CCC enrollees each, and only 2 of the usual 4 or 5 fifty-men barracks. This was done in anticipation of relocating the cabin-barracks along the lakeshore for use as tourist cabins at the termination of the CCC program.

On March 13, 1935, Governor Clyde Tingley of New Mexico telegraphed CCC Director Fechner, urging the approval of a second camp at Elephant Butte Reservoir. He wrote: "I have viewed practically all projects under construction in the state. Elephant Butte Project Number BR-8 greatest of all and



### **Camps BR-8 and BR-54, Camp History/Activities (continued)**

most essential. Can be made the playground of America's largest body of water under dam in state. I am particularly interested in project and will use state money to assist in building driveway along shore of lake and will appreciate moving another camp in immediately" (Tingley 1935). Reclamation Commissioner Elwood Mead had no objection to a second camp at Elephant Butte as long as it did not preclude the establishment of another camp on the Rio Grande Project at Las Cruces, New Mexico. The ECW approved both Camp BR-54 and *Camp BR-39* for occupancy in the summer of 1935.

Situated in the hills behind the lakeside recreation area about 1/4 mile from BR-8, Camp BR-54 was initially referred to as Christobal or Engle. Enrollees built the camp under the direction of John H. Vealey, and it was occupied on August 14, 1935. The first CCC force assigned to BR-54 was Company No. 3830 under commanding officer Q. A. Sanders. Enrollees were veterans recruited from Texas, New Mexico, and Oklahoma.

Initially, separate project superintendents oversaw the work conducted by the two camps. Since the camps' activities overlapped so much, in March 1939 both camps were placed under L. J. Selly, project superintendent for Camp BR-54. The hilly, steep, and rocky terrain at the reservoir made construction challenging and difficult. All building sites and service areas required terracing and deposition of fill dirt. Every bit of excavation for road construction, trenching for pipelines, and terracing and landscaping involved drilling and blasting. Enrollees even blasted holes to plant ash, cedar, juniper, pinyon, and poplar trees, making rock showers a common occurrence. Soil for planting had to be hauled in over a considerable distance. Army supervisors often complained that the men had to work in solid rock. To supply plants for the landscaping, a nursery was established at the reservoir.

During the first 4 years that both camps operated, enrollees accomplished a tremendous amount at Elephant Butte Reservoir. They graded, widened, and improved existing roads in the vicinity of the dam, headquarters, and recreational area. The roads had been one-way truck trails, and all were dangerous and in poor shape. About 4 miles of road had to be relocated, which involved heavy rock construction. The men built a completely new electric transmission and distribution system, and converted the 150-kilowatt hydroelectric plant serving the area to automatic operation. Enrollees laid a new 6-inch, cast-iron water main from the storage tank to the reservoir area and a new distribution system which included an extensive sprinkler system to provide water for new plantings. Work forces also installed a new sewer system and disposal plant.

A major achievement was enhancement of the shoreline terrace for recreation and service use. The area, which encompassed about 7 acres and was 1 mile long, had served as the railroad grade and quarry pits during the dam's construction. Before any new construction could take place there, enrollees excavated 30,000 cubic yards of rock and placed 15,000 cubic yards of earthfill. Rock riprap was then installed along the shoreline to protect it from the high water level of the reservoir.

Enrollees remedied the inadequacy of recreational facilities by constructing a good camping and picnicking area. The limited area that had been available was intensively developed to provide as many camping spaces as possible. Each site was equipped with a fireplace, table and bench combination, and electric light, with an outlet mounted on a post for plugging in appliances or a trailer. The CCC built toilet and shower facilities, as well as parking areas.

### **Camps BR-8 and BR-54, Camp History/Activities (continued)**

Another major enhancement to the public amenities completed by the CCC was a large Spanish Colonial style concession building. Constructed of stone covered with cement stucco, the building incorporated restrooms, a store, restaurant, confectionery, pavilion or lounge room, and attendants' quarters. The rambling building was situated at one side of the parking area at the head of a combination stone stairway and trail, which led down to the boat docks and diving platforms for swimmers.

At the opposite side of the parking area, the CCC started work on a connected group of service buildings consisting of a boat repair shop, gasoline and oil service station, and a locker room with individual lockers available to boat owners wishing to store their motors, boating accessories, and fishing tackle. Enrollees also constructed an inclined boat ramp made of steel rails and concrete leading from the boat repair shop down to the boat docks.

The edge of the terrace in the vicinity of the concession building and docks was finished off to form a stadium for seating of spectators during regattas and other water sports. Beyond the concession building, a wading pool for children was planned.

In the immediate vicinity of the dam, enrollees accomplished a general cleanup of debris and refuse, including removal of all unnecessary telephone and electric poles. An extensive amount of terracing, placement of masonry retaining walls, trail building, and ditching for improved drainage was also undertaken. Excavation of the spillway channel, left unexcavated when the spillway chute was originally constructed, amounted to a major job involving a large amount of rock excavation.

The addition of a fish hatchery 3/4 of a mile below the dam, along the east bank of the Rio Grande River, generated a great deal of public interest. During the dam's construction, the fish hatchery site had been the location of the construction camp. Once the dam was in operation, the rapid fluctuations in reservoir levels, especially during fish spawning season, necessitated artificial stocking. This had been accomplished by transporting fish from as far as 200 to 300 miles away. The Department of the Interior and Department of Commerce signed an interdepartmental agreement providing for a hatchery to be built by Reclamation CCC enrollees on reservoir reserve land and turned over to the Bureau of Fisheries for operation. The hatchery design consisted of 12 ponds, with a total water surface of about 12 acres, strung out in a single row on a gravelly river terrace. Black bass were to be the principal species produced. The capacity was expected to be 250,000 to 500,000 fish.

Construction of the hatchery began on October 1, 1937, as a major work item for both BR-8 and BR-54 enrollees. By the close of 1939, the majority of work had been completed. The camps' annual report for that year stated that the hatchery was the largest single feature being worked on by the two camps. The project included a cottage for the operating foreman, necessary storage and service facilities, a holding house and hatchery building, and a pump house. The road leading from the east end of the dam to the hatchery was also improved. A driveway was planned for the length of the hatchery along the river, and picnic grounds were scheduled to be built.

In addition to all of the experience gained during work hours, CCC enrollees had other learning opportunities. At Camp BR-8, Camp Commander John Lawson served as the first educational adviser in 1935. Seven instructors taught Company No. 855 enrollees the following courses: arithmetic, auto mechanics, civil service, English, first aid, life saving, penmanship, photography, hygiene, spelling,

### **Camps BR-8 and BR-54, Camp History/Activities (continued)**

topography, and typing. Initially, no high school or college level courses were given. Biweekly spelling bees sharpened spelling skills, and the camp's traveling library provided an additional educational resource to enrollees. Class offerings expanded under the camp's next educational adviser, Theodore Nelson. By late 1938, courses had been added in geography, American history, algebra, and high school literature and Spanish. Enrollees could attend morning classes on Monday through Friday before work.

Initially, Camp BR-54 lacked both an educational adviser and library. In 1935, enrollees could only attend a current events class. By late 1938, this had changed significantly, and both morning and evening classes were available in a variety of subjects. Among the high school classes being offered were algebra, composition, civics, American history, Spanish, and spelling. The Works Progress Administration instructor and educational adviser made special efforts to instruct Hispanic males in reading and writing. Both camps held Protestant and Catholic religious services.

When not working or taking classes, enrollees could participate in a variety of social activities. Outside play revolved around basketball, volleyball, baseball, and horseshoes. Fishing and swimming were also enjoyed by the young men. Indoors, the enrollees could listen to the radio; play table tennis, pool, dominoes, and checkers; or spar with a punching bag. BR-8 enrollees established a photography club and set up a dark room. A glee club was formed at the camp, and leather work and drama classes were added. Camp BR-54 enrollees cultivated a cactus and flower garden, along with cedar trees and yuccas. Movies for enrollees from both camps were offered twice a week.

Meals at the camps consisted of a variety of filling and nutritious foods. A menu for BR-54 enrollees on December 1, 1936, offered the following for breakfast: dry cereal, milk, hot cakes, and coffee. Lunch that day consisted of Irish stew, boiled beans, mashed potatoes, bread, and tea. Dinner selections were macaroni and cheese, fried spinach, Boston baked beans, bread, baked apples, and Postum.

Company No. 855 left BR-8 on June 1, 1936, and relocated to BR-54. A February 23, 1940, report noted that 60 percent of the company was "Spanish." There is little, if any, mention of the camp's Hispanic youth in other reports, where enrollees are described under the heading "Caucasian." Company No. 3832W, consisting of young "Caucasians" from New Mexico, with Robert Kirk as commander, took the place of Company No. 855 at BR-8 and remained until August 10, 1939, when they transferred to a camp in Bayfield, Colorado. By then, it was no longer deemed necessary to have two camps at Elephant Butte to complete unfinished work, and Camp BR-8 was terminated.

At BR-54, Company No. 855 remained active until May 10, 1941, when the camp shut down. Following the closure of BR-8, BR-54 enrollees continued with the recreational improvements that were well underway. Work remained to be done at the fish hatchery, which was in an "untidy and unfinished condition." Enrollees regraded and then landscaped the area with stone curbs, walls, terraces, grass, shrubs, and trees.

Men from BR-54 also completed overnight accommodations at the reservoir in response to public demand. In fiscal year 1940, CCC workers built six cabins in "New Mexican" style architecture. They were of masonry construction with concrete floors. Each cabin came equipped with a bathroom, kitchenette, and bedroom large enough for two beds. The structures had running water, electricity, and sewer connections. By the time BR-54 closed, enrollees had finished 15 cabins. Four [the 1940

### **Camps BR-8 and BR-54, Camp History/Activities (continued)**

CCC Annual Report states eight but the Elephant Butte Historic District National Register of Historic Places (National Register) form indicates four] cabins were located in Hospital Canyon. These cabins could not be used conveniently because there were no roads, walks, parking areas, etc., to serve the area. An 18-foot roadway was constructed through the center of this building group. Parking areas were installed on each side of the road for the cabins. Curbs and walls separated the parking areas from lawns and plantings. Terraces and water lines were placed where needed.

At the “old hospital,” renovated as apartments, the CCC installed a new roof and retaining walls and built curbs along the road edge to divert rain water. The enrollees also converted the old Reclamation headquarters office building into a hotel containing 18 guest rooms, 13 of which had private baths. At the service end of the building, an office, four rooms with baths, and two large rooms were refurbished. A small 12-foot by 20-foot log shelter, open on all sides, was built west of the concession building. CCC forces continued the job of landscaping to enhance the reservoir. At the boat shop, they constructed curbs to regulate traffic, installed pedestrian walkways, and planted shrubs and trees. Around the overlook, the men completed foot trails, terracing, and planting.

The CCC made major contributions to the development of Elephant Butte Reservoir as a recreational area and transformed the landscape by building a variety of structures, terracing the hillsides, and planting hundreds of trees. Today, many of the CCC buildings and other features still remain and comprise a major component of the Elephant Butte Historic District, listed in the National Register in February 1997. Identified as contributing to the district are CCC-built structures located in the Hatchery Group (masonry-lined arroyo and small bridges, fish hatchery residence, hatchery office building, hatchery pond area, holding house, and hatchery); the Water Tank Hill Group (picnic area and retaining walls); the Hospital Canyon Group (2 cottages); and the Lake Side Group (pergola, rest rooms, concession building, boat house, 15 tourist cabins, campground, and landscaping). According to the Elephant Butte Historic District National Register form, “The CCC work at Elephant Butte is so extensive and well preserved that it provides a direct link to this aspect of national history.”

### **CAMP DESCRIPTION (number/type of buildings)**

Camp BR-8, constructed on Reclamation-acquired land, consisted of the following: 22 cabin-type barracks, 2 large barracks, 1 mess hall extension (30 feet by 34 feet), 1 bath house (20 feet by 27 feet), 1 latrine (16 feet by 20 feet), and 1 oil house (9 feet by 14 feet). All were of the fixed type and constructed in September 1934.

Camp BR-54 was also constructed on Federal land under the jurisdiction of Reclamation. Buildings at the camp were all wood frame. Rigid structures included the following: an officers’ quarters and technical services quarters (20 feet by 97 feet); 5 barracks (20 feet by 104 feet); a mess hall (20 feet by 121 feet) and kitchen wing (20 feet by 56 feet); a headquarters building (20 feet by 32 feet) combined with a storehouse (20 feet by 32 feet); a welfare exchange building (20 feet by 33 feet) combined with a recreational hall (20 feet by 67 feet); an infirmary (20 feet by 33 feet); a bathhouse/latrine (20 feet by 37 feet); a garage (20 feet by 30 feet); an oil house (9 feet by 14 feet); and a pumphouse (9 feet by 10 feet). The only portable structure was the educational building (20 feet by 130 feet). Other features installed at the camp were a flag pole, rock masonry bulletin board, and rock masonry fish pool.

## Camp BR-8 and BR-54 (continued)

### DISPOSITION/CURRENT STATUS

In April 1939, after approval was granted to terminate Camp BR-8, Department of the Interior CCC Advisory Council Representative Conrad Wirth requested permission of CCC Director Fechner to allow the Army to salvage the camp buildings for CCC purposes, except for the 22 cabin-type barracks. In accordance with the original plans for the cabins, Wirth requested that they be turned over to Reclamation for use in the recreational development at Elephant Butte. On May 13, 1939, the Treasury Department Procurement Division formally transferred the cabins to Reclamation. The other buildings were released to the Army for salvage.

On December 15, 1942, the CCC prepared a report recommending that the camp structures at BR-54 be turned over to Reclamation “for use and salvage as needed in the development, improvement and maintenance of irrigation storage, power and recreational facilities at Elephant Butte and Caballo Reservoirs.” A March 29, 1944, memo states that the camp was transferred to Reclamation and was intact, except for one building which had been sold to the Army.

### SOURCES

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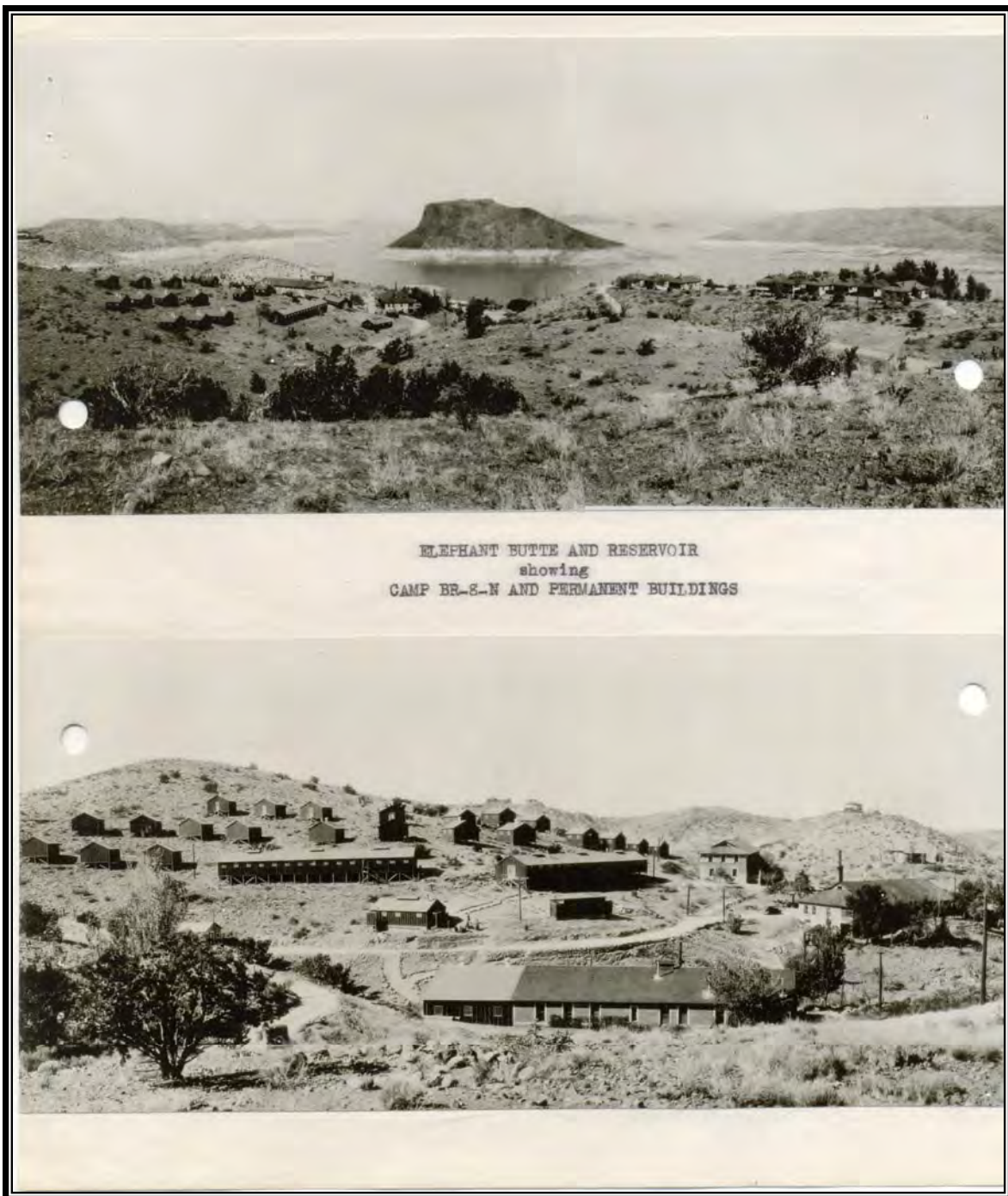
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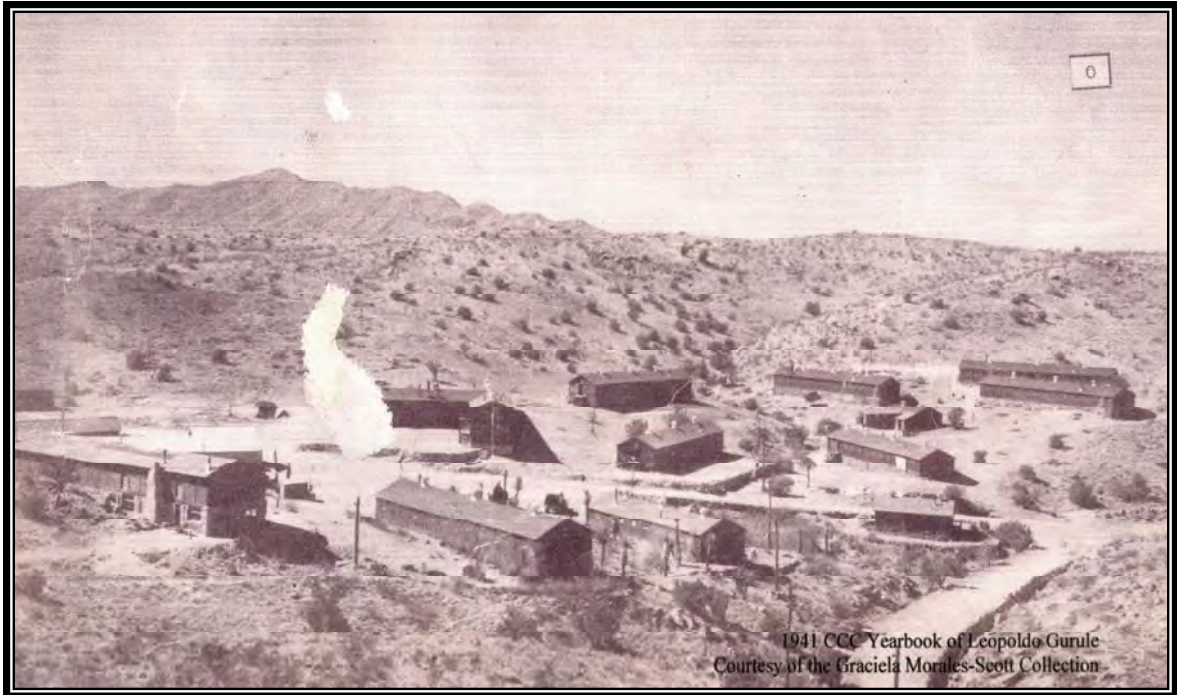
Telegram from Governor Clyde Tingley to Robert Fechner, March 13, 1935, Box 183, Entry 7, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

“Work of the Civilian Conservation Corps at Elephant Butte Reservoir,” *The Reclamation Era* 28 (January 1938), 16-18.

**Recorded by: Christine Pfaff, Bureau of Reclamation, Denver, 2009**

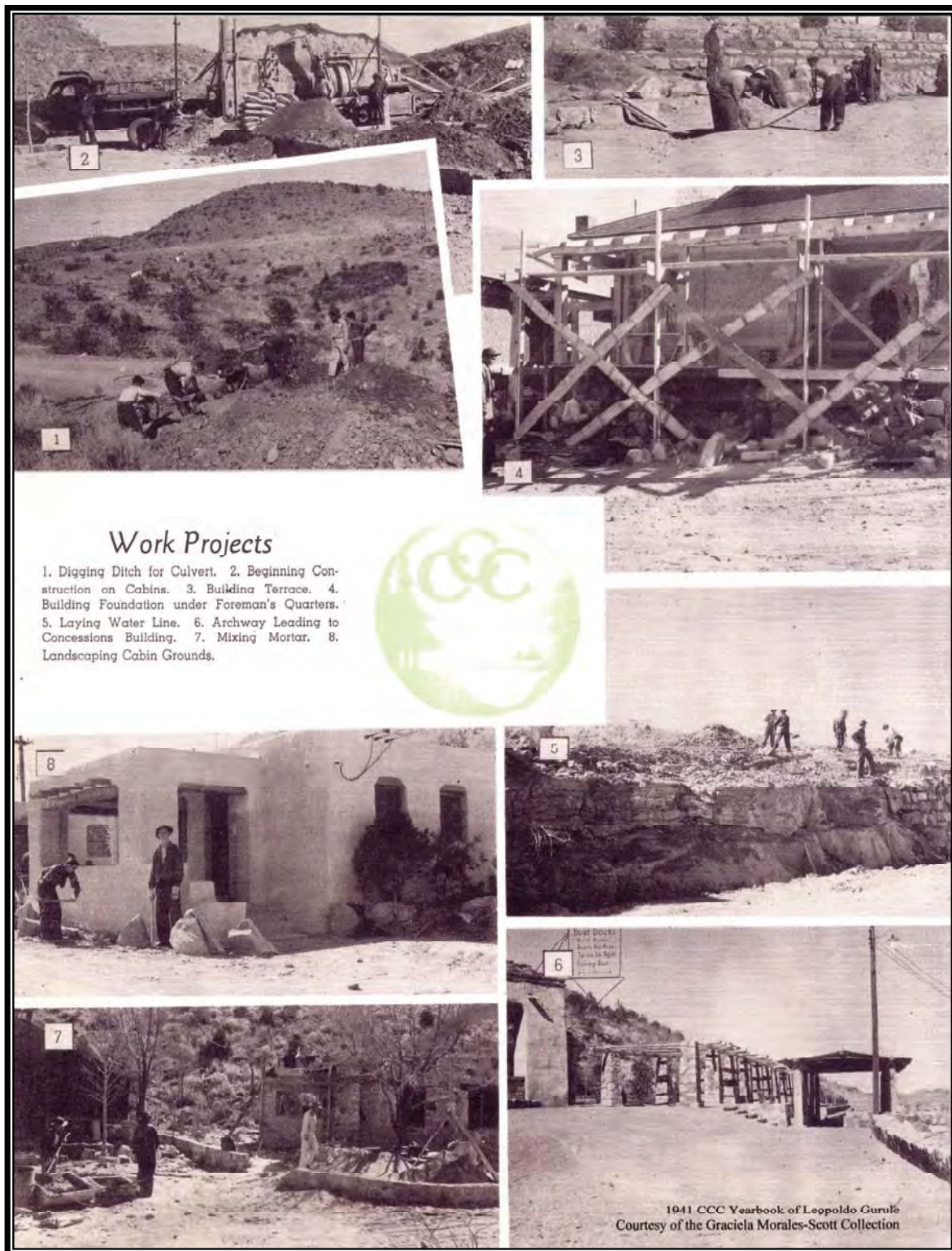


Camp BR-8: Rio Grande Project, view of camp and Elephant Butte Reservoir, date unknown (courtesy of Marron and Associates, Inc.).



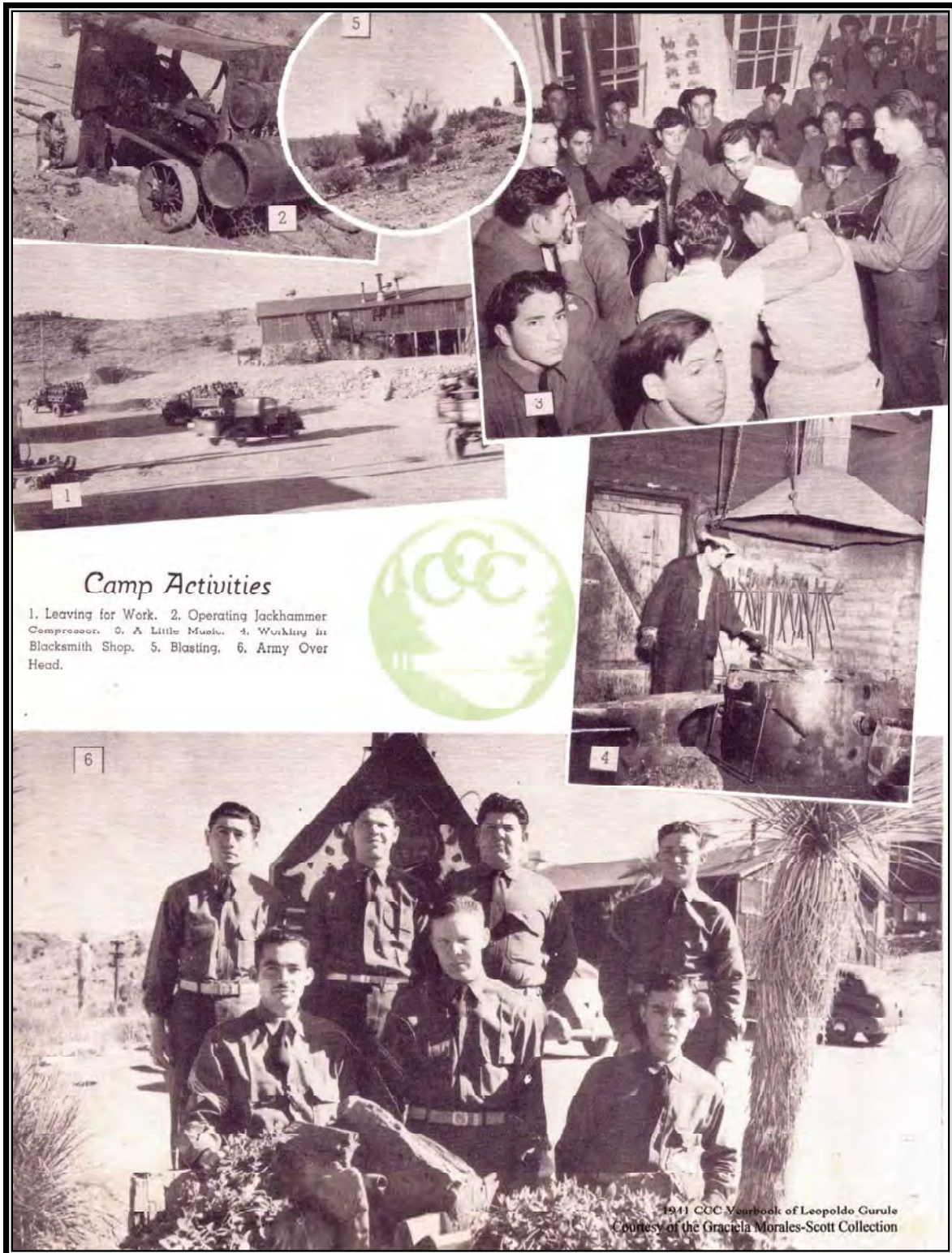
Camp BR-54: Rio Grande Project, view of camp, 1941 (CCC Yearbook, courtesy of Graciela Morales-Scott).





Camps BR-8 and BR-54: Rio Grande Project, CCC work projects, 1941 (CCC Yearbook, courtesy of Graciela Morales-Scott).





Camps BR-8 and BR-54: Rio Grande Project, camp activities, 1941 (CCC Yearbook, courtesy of Graciela Morales-Scott).



Camp BR-54: Rio Grande Project, camp personnel, 1941 (CCC Yearbook, courtesy of Graciela Morales-Scott).





Camps BR-8 and BR-54: Rio Grande Project, landscaping cabin grounds, 1941 (CCC Yearbook, courtesy of Graciela Morales-Scott).



Camps BR-8 and BR-54: Rio Grande Project, view of tourist cabins constructed by CCC, 2008 (photo by Christine Pfaff, Bureau of Reclamation).



Camps BR-8 and BR-54: Rio Grande Project, view of pergola constructed by CCC, 2008 (photo by Christine Pfaff, Bureau of Reclamation).

## BUREAU OF RECLAMATION CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS STUDY

<b>Camp Number</b>	<b>BR-9 and BR-10</b>	<b>Camp Name</b>	Guernsey
<b>State</b>	Wyoming	<b>County</b>	Platte
<b>Location</b>	Lake Guernsey State Park: 1 mile NW of Guernsey, Wyoming BR-9: T. 27, R. 66 W., sec. 22, E1/2 SE1/4 SE1/4 SW1/4, SW1/4 SW1/4 SE1/4 BR-10: T. 27, R. 67, sec. 21, SW1/4 SE1/4 SW1/4, NW1/4 SE1/4 SE1/4 SW1/4		
<b>Reclamation Project</b>	North Platte	<b>Army Corps Area</b>	8
<b>Date Established</b>	BR-9: May 21, 1934 BR-10: July 6, 1934	<b>Date Terminated</b>	BR-9: August 7, 1938 BR-10: January 8, 1936
<b>CAMP HISTORY/ACTIVITIES</b>			
<p>Camp Guernsey, BR-9, at Lake Guernsey State Park was the first of six CCC camps that operated on the North Platte Project. Established on May 21, 1934, during the third CCC enrollment period, the camp was created under a cooperative agreement with the National Park Service (NPS). The occupants of Camp BR-9 consisted of members of Company No. 844, which originated as a U.S. Forest Service unit in Fort Bliss, Texas, in 1933. A second camp, occupied by Company No. 1858, was established at Lake Guernsey on July 6, 1934. The camp was initially called Camp DBR-10, which identified it as a drought relief camp. These camps were part of the regular CCC program but were confined to States that had suffered severely from drought and were financed by different appropriations.</p> <p>The Bureau of Reclamation completed Lake Guernsey Dam and Reservoir in 1927 as part of the North Platte Project. No recreational development occurred at the time. Availability of CCC labor in the early 1930s provided a perfect opportunity to create a State park at the reservoir on Federal lands that had been purchased for the project. Along with work completed at Elephant Butte Reservoir in New Mexico (see <i>Camp BR-8</i>), construction of Lake Guernsey State Park was one of the first two joint Reclamation/NPS/CCC endeavors initiated. The park soon evolved into a showplace of State park design in Wyoming and became the most important early example of recreational development around a Reclamation reservoir in the West. Park features completed by the CCC include a lakeshore drive and skyline drive, an exceptional group of overlook and picnic shelters, a museum, water fountains, bridges, and an extensive trail system.</p> <p>Company No. 844 arrived at Lake Guernsey on May 21, 1934, under the supervision of Camp Superintendent J. H. Coffman, who would oversee most of the work in the park over the next 5 years. Camp BR-9 was set up on a scenic bluff north of the dam, and the boys were occupied most of the first season building the barracks and other facilities for the camp itself. In July 1934, members of Company No. 1858 reported at Lake Guernsey and set up Camp BR-10 about 1 mile west of Guernsey Dam.</p> <p>At the time, the reservoir's shoreline remained largely undeveloped (although it already attracted visitors) apart from the powerplant and some construction-related buildings near the dam. A lakeshore drive, extending north from the dam along the reservoir, had also been started as part of an early Civil Works Administration work relief project. NPS landscape architects began their studies for recreational improvements at Lake Guernsey in 1933. The first comprehensive plans for the park were dated November 1934, about the time the CCC recruits had finished camp construction. Richard G. Redell, NPS landscape architect who went on to become chief planner of the park, drew up the initial plans.</p>			

### **Camps BR-9 and BR-10, Camp History/Activities (continued)**

By the spring of 1935, Redell and another landscape architect, C. Eldon Jones, had developed a “master plan” that clearly delineated major park roads, trails, overlooks, shelters, and other facilities. The plan featured a single entrance on the southern edge of the property. The entrance road then forked immediately after the entry into the two main proposed park roads: Lakeshore Drive on the east side of the lake, to be lined with picnic areas and piers; and Skyline Drive ascending the high bluffs on the west side of the reservoir, and leading to overlooks and picnic shelters at scenic viewpoints.

The master plan depicted the southeastern shore of the reservoir, near the dam and powerplant, as the most developed portion of the park. A hill located north of the dam, which offered scenic views of the surrounding reservoir, became the focal point for this area. Camp BR-9 was sited on the west side of the hill, and, adjacent to the camp, the NPS had their headquarters buildings. Plans for the area also included lots for the construction of leased vacation homes along the lake shore (a policy authorized earlier by Reclamation), as well as a superintendent’s residence.

The NPS designers laid out an extensive trail system to provide visitors the opportunity to explore the park on foot. The steep topography required the construction of a large number of steps along the trails, and CCC enrollees used the plentiful local building stone to perfect their stone-laying skills.

At the heart of the trail network, on the summit of the hill overlooking Lake Guernsey, a site was reserved for the park’s most important building, the museum. Designed early in 1935, this exceptional building was the work of one of the resident architects, Roland Pray. The main entrance was purposely laid out facing west, providing visitors leaving the building with a fine view of Laramie Peak. Built entirely by CCC crews (with help from Local Experienced Men) out of locally quarried bluff and white sandstones, the museum was enclosed by a roof framed of heavy, hand-hewn timbers covered with 2-inch planks and split cedar shingles. Inside, the building contained two windowless exhibition halls, a library room, a small office, and a store room. CCC enrollees hand-fabricated wrought-iron hardware door hinges, latches, lamps, chandeliers, and light scones. Fourteen different display cases were arranged around the outside walls of the exhibit halls and depicted the prehistoric and historic background of eastern Wyoming. John Ewers of the NPS museum planning staff at Berkeley, California, planned the exhibits. Most of them still exist and have been maintained in their original location.

The two CCC camps at Lake Guernsey were extremely busy through the winter of 1934 and in 1935, and the park soon became a focal point of CCC activity in Wyoming. By the spring of 1935, regional inspector Kenneth Jones reported that construction on the museum, park trails, shelters, and other projects was progressing well and that the “appearance of energy shown by the enrollees is greater than in any other camp I know.” The nearby town of Guernsey followed events at the park closely, and, as usual, the visit by the CCC regional inspector warranted a story in the *Guernsey Gazette*, which also published Roland Pray’s rendering of the park museum, as well as status reports on other projects underway in the park.

By 1935, several major structures (in addition to the park museum) were being built by the two CCC camps, now well established on either side of the lake. While Camp BR-9 enrollees continued work on the museum and other projects on the east side of the lake, Camp BR-10 enrollees made construction progress on Skyline Drive and various picnic shelters and other structures at designated points. Architect E.S. Moser, assigned to Camp BR-10, provided designs for a combination picnic and overlook shelter, a comfort station, and picnic facilities for what was called the North Bluff area at the



### **Camps BR-9 and BR-10, Camp History/Activities (continued)**

terminus of Skyline Drive. The CCC boys built the handsome picnic shelter of locally quarried buff limestone, and the nearby comfort station was executed in massive sandstone blocks. By the fall of 1935, Thomas Tucker, the superintendent of Camp BR-10, reported completion of the North Bluff comfort station and good progress on the picnic shelter. Another lookout was constructed at Brimmer Point, and numerous road and trail projects were underway.

In January 1936, progress slowed with the scaling back of the national CCC program and the resulting closure of Camp BR-10. The remaining camp in the park came under the supervision of a new regional inspector, Halsey M. Davidson. Davidson noted that several projects had been left incomplete by Camp BR-10 but would be taken up by Camp BR-9, adding that the “excellence of the work being done” by that camp was “commendable.”

Despite the loss of one camp, the CCC at Lake Guernsey experienced a halcyon summer in 1936. Superintendent Coffman reported that the museum and other major stone structures in the park were 98 percent complete by that fall and that the recruits were moving ahead on various smaller projects, such as log guardrail construction, and greeting visitors and gathering information on them.

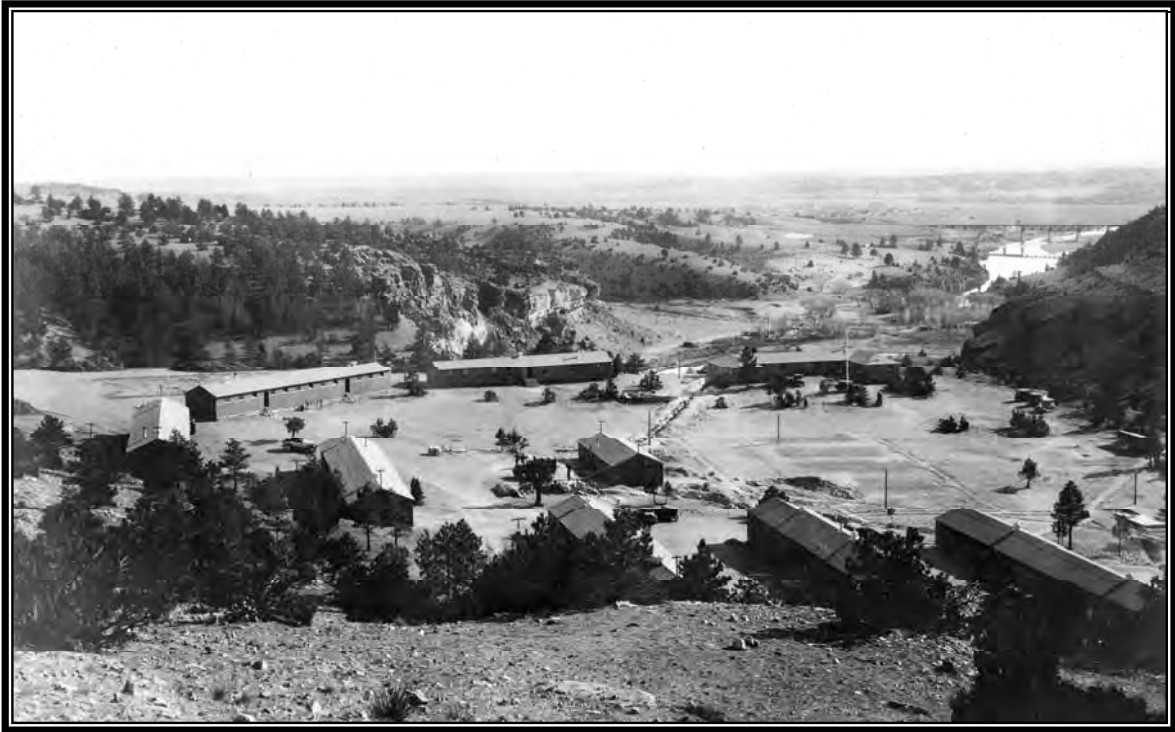
As 1936 came to a close, so too did many of the projects initiated in 1934. By then, the new museum was already being recognized as an architectural highlight of the entire CCC State park effort, and the structure was praised as one of the most beautiful small museums in the West. In 1937, Richard Redell began drawing up another master plan indicating further park development projects for Lake Guernsey. Some of the recommendations called for widening park roads, enlarging parking areas and creating new ones, and expanding the trail system. Many of these improvements were undertaken in 1937 and 1938. The fiscal year 1938 annual report for Camp BR-9 stated that enrollees were engaged mostly on construction of park roads, landscaping, and other recreational facilities, and also had completed some riprapping on the Interstate Canal and other work items on Guernsey Dam. The following fiscal year, the CCC boys were mainly busy with recreational projects around the lake up until August 7, 1938, when Camp BR-9 was disbanded. The enrollees packed up, and the next day, they continued their CCC experience at another Reclamation camp, *BR-83*, in Veteran, Wyoming. A small detail of men remained behind for the purpose of completing unfinished projects.

The outstanding significance of the contributions made by the CCC at Lake Guernsey resulted in the designation of Lake Guernsey State Park as a National Historic Landmark on September 25, 1997. The nomination form documents the history of the two CCC camps at the park and summarizes its significance as follows: “Lake Guernsey State Park. . . epitomizes the artistic quality and high aspirations held for the state parks designed by the Park Service and built by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) during the 1930's. The park represents the highest achievements of the collaboration of the Park Service, the CCC, and local park authorities (in this case, the local project office of the Bureau of Reclamation) during the New Deal.” The above information on the history of the CCC activities is excerpted largely from the Lake Guernsey State Park National Historic Landmark nomination form.

Today, evidence of the CCC legacy exists in the numerous features built by CCC enrollees and still in use at Lake Guernsey State Park. The National Historic Landmark nomination form identifies 60 contributing buildings, structures, and sites, of which all but a few were the work of the CCC. Reclamation still owns the park facilities and has an agreement with Wyoming State Parks to manage them.

## Camps BR-9 and 10 (continued)

CAMP DESCRIPTION (number/type of buildings)
<p>Camp BR-9 was originally made up of 22 structures. All were of the “fixed type” and were constructed by the Army in 1934. After closure of the camp, the army requested, and received permission, to move the recreational building (20 feet by 84 feet) and one barrack (20 feet by 112 feet) for use at <i>Camp BR-83</i>, Wyoming. Two other barracks (20 feet by 112 feet) were salvaged by the Bureau of Reclamation for CCC use at Camp BR-1, Minatare, Nebraska. The remaining buildings were left in place for use as a side camp. In February 1943, those buildings were transferred from the CCC Division to Reclamation. Today, two of them still stand at Lake Guernsey: a 1-story, wood-frame shop building and a 10-bay, 1-story, wood-frame garage. There are also remnants of trails, footings, and foundations at the campsite.</p> <p>Camp BR-10 buildings were also of rigid wood-frame construction. None of the buildings survive.</p>
DISPOSITION/CURRENT STATUS
<p>The two remaining structures of Camp BR-9 are included as contributing structures within the Guernsey Lake State Park National Landmark boundaries.</p>
SOURCES
<p><a href="http://wyoshpo.state.wy.us/westerntrails/galleryintroparks.html">http://wyoshpo.state.wy.us/westerntrails/galleryintroparks.html</a></p> <p>Phone contact with Todd Thibodeau, Wyoming State Parks, April 2008.</p> <p>Reclamation, <i>Annual Project Histories, North Platte Project</i>, 1934 through 1938, Boxes 400 through 402, Entry 10, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.</p> <p>Reclamation, General Records of CCC Activities, Boxes 11, 13, 35, 36, and 48, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.</p> <p>Susan Begley and Ethan Carr, National Historic Landmark Nomination Form, Lake Guernsey State Park, National Park Service, 1997.</p> <p><b>Recorded by: Christine Pfaff, Bureau of Reclamation, Denver, 2009</b></p>



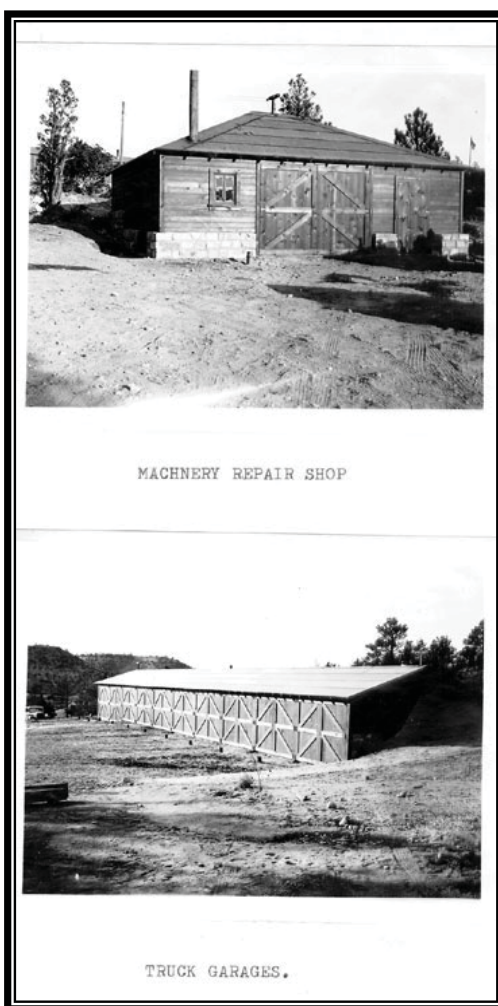
Camp BR-9: North Platte Project, view of camp, 1934 (Box 400. Entry 10, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-9: North Platte Project, educational building, date unknown (courtesy of Wyoming State Parks, Historic Sites and Trails).



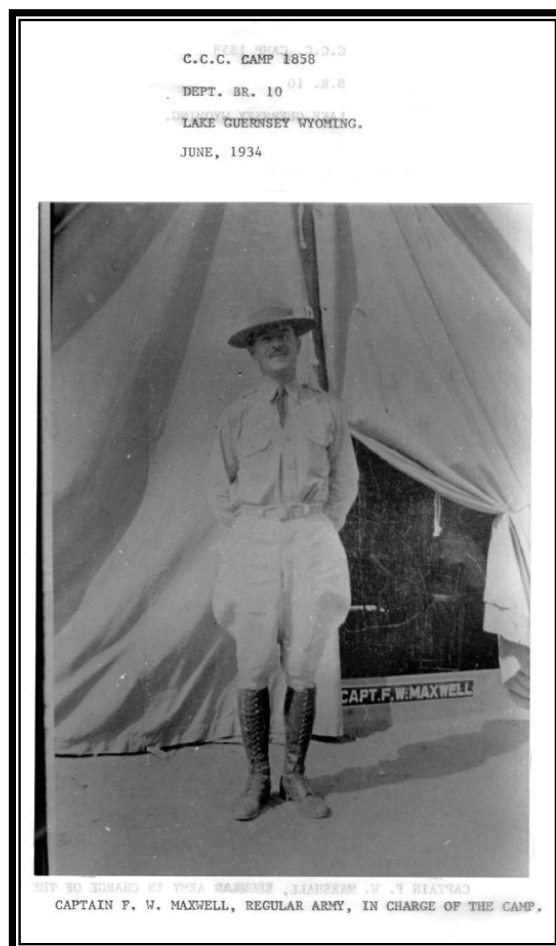
Camp BR-9: North Platte Project, classroom photo, 1937 (Box 8, Entry 21, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-9: North Platte Project, machinery repair shop and 10-stall garage, date unknown (courtesy of Wyoming State Parks, Historic Sites and Trails).



Camp BR-10: North Platte Project, view of camp, 1934 (Box 400, Entry 10, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).

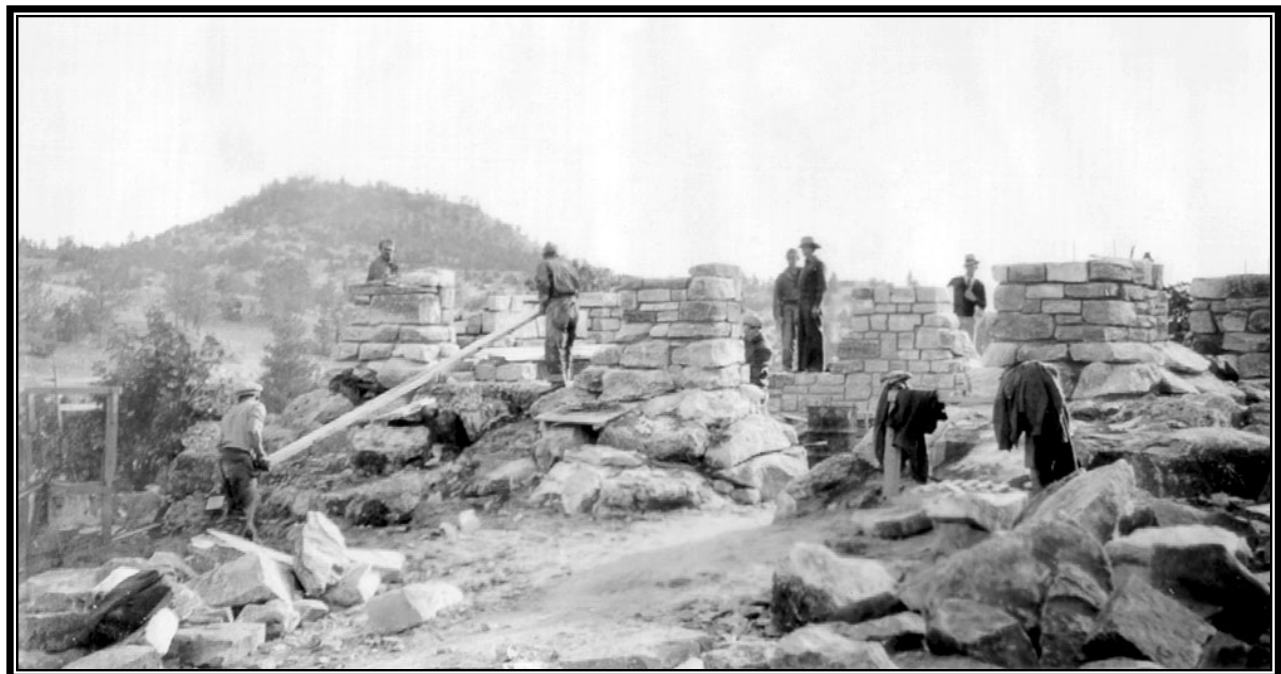


Camp BR-10: North Platte Project, Captain F. W. Maxwell, regular Army, camp commander, June 1934 (courtesy of Wyoming State Parks, Historic Sites and Trails).





Camps BR-9 and BR-10: North Platte Project, completed water fountain and picnic area, January 5, 1935 (Box 181, Entry 7, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camps BR-9 and BR-10: North Platte Project, picnic shelter under construction, January 15, 1935 (Box 181, Entry 7, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).

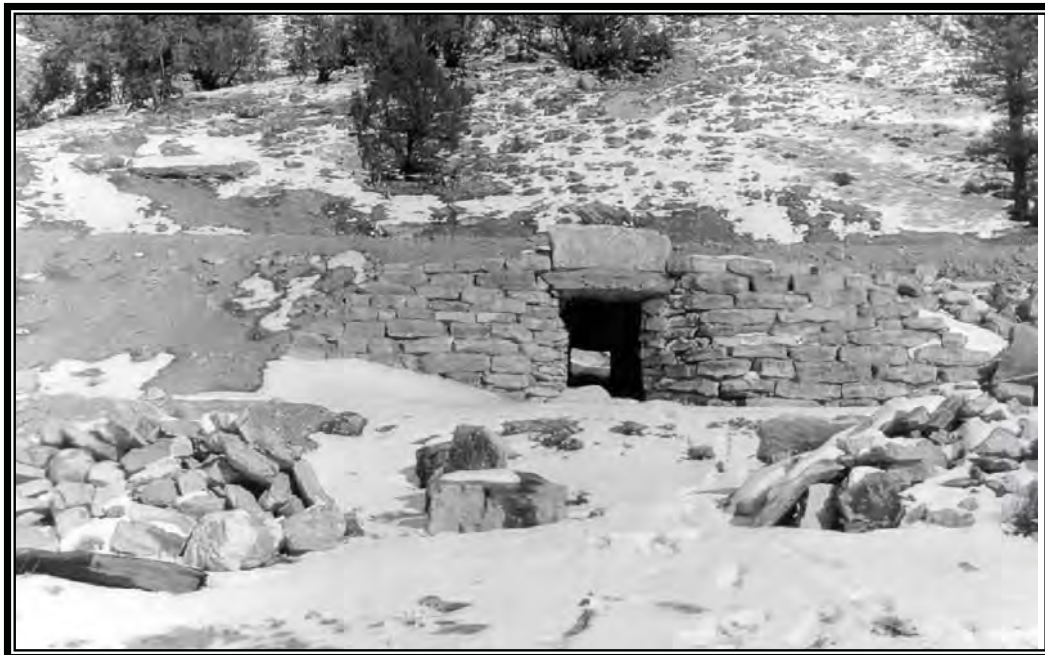


Camps BR-9 and BR-10: North Platte Project, fireplace in picnic shelter under construction, January 30, 1935 (Box 181, Entry 7, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camps BR-9 and BR-10: North Platte Project, picnic shelter under construction, February 15, 1935 (Box 181, Entry 7, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).





Camps BR-9 and BR-10: North Platte Project, type of culvert, March 5, 1935 (Box 181, Entry 7, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camps BR-9 and BR-10: North Platte Project, constructing stairway to trail leading to foot of spillway, March 5, 1935 (Box 181, Entry 7, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camps BR-9 and BR-10: North Platte Project, vehicle bridge under construction, March 26, 1935 (Box 181, Entry 7, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camps BR-9 and BR-10: North Platte Project, completed interior of CCC museum at Lake Guernsey, date unknown (Box 1, Entry 31, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camps BR-9 and BR-10: North Platte Project, museum, 2003 (photo by Christine Pfaff, Bureau of Reclamation).

## BUREAU OF RECLAMATION CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS STUDY

<b>Camp Number</b>	<b>BR-11</b>	<b>Camp Name</b>	Bridgeland
<b>State</b>	Utah	<b>County</b>	Duchesne
<b>Location</b>	Bridgeland, 5 miles east of Duchesne		
<b>Reclamation Project</b>	Moon Lake	<b>Army Corps Area</b>	9
<b>Date Established</b>	October 1934	<b>Date Terminated</b>	September 30, 1939

### **CAMP HISTORY/ACTIVITIES**

The Bureau of Reclamation's Moon Lake Project in northeastern Utah is located on the north side of the Duchesne River, about 140 miles east of Salt Lake City. The project stores water in Moon Lake and Midview Reservoir to supplement the water supply for land along the Lake Fork and Uinta Rivers. Originally, the project was divided into two construction divisions: Moon Lake Dam, which was completed under contract in 1938, and the Moon Lake Canal System, which was constructed by CCC forces between 1934 and 1940 under the supervision of Reclamation engineer E. O. Larson. The canal system included the Yellowstone Feeder Canal, Midview Dam and Dike, Midview Lateral, and the Duchesne Diversion Works and Feeder Canal. The Moon Lake Canal system, through storage and exchange agreements, was designed to distribute the waters of the Duchesne and Lake Fork Rivers to project lands in the Uinta Basin.

Camp Bridgeland, BR-11, was established on the Moon Lake Project in October 1934 as a winter camp. It was originally designated Camp DBR-11, indicating its origins as a drought relief camp. These camps were part of the regular CCC program, but were confined to States that suffered severely from the drought and were financed with drought relief funds. Enrollees from the high elevation summer *Camp BR-5* moved down lower in the fall of 1934 to become the first occupants of BR-11, located more than 30 miles from Moon Lake Reservoir.

Camp BR-11 enrollees set to work right away building the Duchesne Feeder Canal, Midview Reservoir, and Midview Lateral. Reclamation's Denver office furnished detailed designs for the features. Within two years, the 17-mile-long Duchesne Feeder Canal had been completed. It diverts water from the Duchesne River to the Midview Reservoir and to lands along the Lake Fork River. The Midview Reservoir, an off-stream reservoir with a storage capacity of 5,800 acre-feet, involved the construction of four principal features: an earthfill dam, outlet works, dike, and spillway. The CCC completed practically all of the work on these features by the summer of 1938. Midview Dam, at the eastern end of the reservoir, has a crest length of 663 feet and a maximum height of 68 feet above bedrock. The main body of the dam consists of an earth embankment deposited in horizontal layers and compacted by rolling. A gravel and rock blanket was placed on the upstream slope for protection, and a fill composed of sand, gravel, and boulders covered the downstream face. Release of water from the reservoir was accomplished by means of a 3-foot-diameter, reinforced concrete conduit built under the dam near the left abutment. Two cast-iron slide gates installed midway in the 300-foot-long conduit regulated the flow of water through the outlet works. CCC enrollees constructed a 2,500-foot-long dike of compacted clay, sand, and gravel at the north end of the reservoir. The embankment included a graveled roadway along the top. Near the upstream slope of the dike, the CCC built an overflow spillway to permit the discharge of floodwaters into a natural ravine leading away from the reservoir.

Dedication of Midview Dam took place on September 10, 1937. Upon completion, it was the largest earthfill dam built in Utah by CCC enrollees. The dam and its appurtenant features were lauded as "a noteworthy example of the type of permanent construction and improvement accomplished under the



### **Camp BR-11, Camp History/Activities (continued)**

CCC work program as a part of the Bureau of Reclamation's program of water conservation." ("Civilian Conservation Corps Constructs Midview Dam, Moon Lake Project, Utah," *The Reclamation Era*, July 1938)

Later in the same article, the author described the knowledge and skills acquired by the enrollees in completing the major construction project: "At the beginning of construction, the CCC enrollees, whose ages did not average more than 17 to 19 years, were inexperienced in construction methods or manual labor. These circumstances necessitated the employment of some skilled workmen, which provided an opportunity for the enrollees to adapt themselves to the type of work being done. The enrollees were trained in small groups directed by a foreman or enrollee leaders on the various types of work, such as operation of trucks, tractors, and other heavy equipment, the excavation and placing of embankment, construction of concrete forms, placing reinforcement steel, and other related work." With their newfound skills, many of the CCC enrollees were able to find employment later with contractors or other Government agencies.

The young men from BR-11 gained additional work experience during construction of the other two components of the Moon Lake Canal System: Midview Lateral and the Yellowstone Feeder Canal. Midview Lateral is 9 miles long and connects the Midview Reservoir with the Lake Fork River. In connection with the lateral, CCC crews built forty minor structures including a reinforced concrete siphon beneath the Lake Fork River to transport water to the Dry Gulch Canal on the other side.

The 22.5-mile-long Yellowstone Feeder Canal conveys water from the East Fork of the Lake Fork to the west branch of Cottonwood Creek. Due to the work site being a considerable distance from Camp BR-11, a spike camp was established at Altonah, about 25 miles closer to the job. CCC crews began work on the canal in April 1938, and it was completed in July 1940. The last two miles were constructed by the Moon Lake Water Users Association.

In addition to the hands-on training, CCC enrollees availed themselves of the opportunity to take classes in the educational building. Subjects ranged from spelling and grammar to blueprint reading and bee culture to auto mechanics and warehousing. Enrollees also took advantage of inexpensive correspondence school courses offered by the California State Department of Education. These included subjects such as journalism, elementary aeronautics, diesel engine, placer mining, chemistry, and photography. In the narrative report for the ninth enrollment period (April 1, 1937, to September 30, 1937), the author described the educational opportunities and other activities of the camp. Wednesday nights were devoted solely to job training; no passes were issued at camp on those nights, and the foremen were all required to teach some phase of the subject on which they gave job training during the day. Other activities available to enrollees included ping pong, billiards, tennis, a leaders' club, first-aid classes, movies, and lectures on subjects such as "Americanism."

Company meetings were held each week, where job and camp problems were discussed, and talks were given to enrollees on subjects such as the importance of safety precautions, taking pride in the appearance of the camp, and personal hygiene. Early on in the camp's existence, an enrollee contracted scarlet fever, and the camp was quarantined from March 8, 1935, to March 29, 1935. During unusually heavy snows during the winter of 1936-37, CCC enrollees helped to open a road that allowed safe passage of about 50,000 head of sheep stranded in Pleasant Valley in the Uintah Basin. A camp newsletter entitled "CCC Reflections," that was published twice monthly, recorded events at Camp BR-11.

### **Camp BR-11, Camp History/Activities (continued)**

In early October 1939, everyone at Camp BR-11 was transferred to newly established *Camp BR-91* in Pleasant Grove, Utah. All subsequent construction activities on the Moon Lake Project were carried out from *Camp BR-91* spike camps located at Altonah and Moon Lake. The additional work items consisted of building a parapet and curb wall on Moon Lake Dam, constructing 125 water control structures, placing riprap, and lining waterways. Early in 1941, such a small number of enrollees from *Camp BR-91* were available to work on the Moon Lake Project that the Moon Lake Water Users Association cooperated by furnishing additional labor and equipment. When *Camp BR-91* was disbanded in August 1941, Reclamation forces completed any unfinished tasks.

### **CAMP DESCRIPTION (number/type of buildings)**

Camp BR-11 was constructed on private land by the Army in September and October of 1934. Buildings were of the fixed type and totaled 20. These included four barracks (20 feet by 106 feet), a mess hall (20 feet by 137 feet), a kitchen wing (20 feet by 36 feet), an education building (20 feet by 78 feet), an infirmary (20 feet by 40 feet), technical and officers' quarters (20 feet by 40 feet), headquarters (20 feet by 127 feet), a bath house (20 feet by 40 feet), and various other storage and utility buildings.

### **DISPOSITION/CURRENT STATUS**

In the summer of 1940, Reclamation received permission from the CCC to salvage the buildings at Camp BR-11. Both the U.S. Grazing Service and U.S. Forest Service had requested transfer of some of the buildings for further use, and in August 1940, Reclamation approved their dismantling. The U.S. Grazing Service obtained 12 buildings, and the other 8 went to the U.S. Forest Service.

Today, at the site of BR-11, there is a wooden interpretive sign, apparently installed by the Boy Scouts, and two stone pyramidal piers built by the CCC.

### **SOURCES**

Camp BR-11 is mentioned in articles on Reclamation's CCC program in the following editions of *The Reclamation Era*: January 1935 (pp. 22-23); January 1937 (pp. 20-21); February 1937 (pp. 38-39); August 1937 (pp. 188-190).

"Civilian Conservation Corps Constructs Midview Dam, Moon Lake Project, Utah," *The Reclamation Era* 28 (July 1938), 136-138.

Kenneth W. Baldridge, "Nine Years of Achievement: The Civilian Conservation Corps in Utah," Ph.D., Brigham Young University, May 1971.

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Reclamation, General Correspondence, Box 183, Entry 7, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

**Recorded by: Christine Pfaff, Bureau of Reclamation, Denver, 2009**



Camp BR-11: Moon Lake Project, view of camp, August 1939 (Bureau of Reclamation, Provo Area Office).



Camp BR-11: Moon Lake Project, enrollees seated for transportation (note safety gates across back of truck), April 2, 1937 (Box 10, Accession No. 8NS-115-95-112, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).





Camp BR-11: Moon Lake Project, concreting operations for parapet wall at Midview Dam (Box 97, Accession No. 8NN-115-90-011, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-11: Moon Lake Project, inlet to Lake Fork Siphon (Box 97, Accession No. 8NN-115-90-011, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-11: Moon Lake Project, completed parapet and curb walls on Midview Dam, March 29, 1940 (Accession No. 8NN-115-90-011, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-11: Moon Lake Project, driving laminated timber piling for cutoff wall along axis at Duchesne Feeder Canal diversion structure, March 2, 1939 (Accession No. 8NN-115-90-011, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).





Camp BR-11: Moon Lake Project, Boy Scout sign at site of Camp BR-11, 2000 (Bureau of Reclamation, Provo Area Office).



Camp BR-11: Moon Lake Project, view of site of Camp BR-11, 2000 (Bureau of Reclamation, Provo Area Office).

## BUREAU OF RECLAMATION CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS STUDY

<b>Camp Number</b>	<b>BR-12</b>	<b>Camp Name</b>	Huntsville
<b>State</b>	Utah	<b>County</b>	Weber
<b>Location</b>	2 miles northwest of Huntsville, T. 6 N., R. 1 E., sec. 12		
<b>Reclamation Project</b>	Ogden River	<b>Army Corps Area</b>	9
<b>Date Established</b>	October 15, 1934	<b>Date Terminated</b>	Spring 1938
<b>CAMP HISTORY/ACTIVITIES</b>			
<p>Camp Huntsville, BR-12, was established as a winter camp on the Ogden River Project, located in north-central Utah near Ogden and Brigham City. The project came into being during the Great Depression to furnish an irrigation supply to almost 25,000 acres of land lying between the Wasatch Mountains and the Great Salt Lake, and a supplemental municipal water supply for the city of Ogden. President Roosevelt approved the project on November 16, 1935, and construction proceeded the following year using funds allotted under the National Industrial Recovery Act of June 16, 1933. Pineview Reservoir, completed in 1937, stores water for project use.</p> <p>Camp BR-12 was initially occupied in October 1934 as a winter camp for enrollees from the high elevation summer <i>Camp BR-6</i>. Both camps were among the first group allotted to the Bureau of Reclamation and were designated as drought relief camps. These were identical in principle to regular Emergency Conservation Work (ECW) camps (renamed CCC camps) but were confined to States that had suffered severely from the drought.</p> <p>CCC enrollees from Camp BR-12 contributed to the construction of Pineview Dam by completing features not covered under the Government's contract with Utah Construction Company of Ogden and Morrison-Knudsen Company of Boise, Idaho. The young men from the camp cleared the reservoir site of buildings, brush, and fences; constructed parapet and curb walls on the dam; built fences at the dam to prevent access to areas considered vulnerable to sabotage; and placed reinforced concrete gate sills in the dam spillway to raise the water surface elevation by 1 foot. They also completed cleanup of the area around the dam and the installation of landscaping. Other major accomplishments included the extension of the South Ogden Canal and wasteway, the construction of wasteway reservoirs located above orchard country to prevent flooding of cultivated lands, the construction of distribution features of the irrigation system, the construction of equalizing reservoirs, and the dismantling of a portion of the 72-inch wood stave pipeline at Ogden Canyon.</p> <p>In the summers of 1935 and 1936, a small spike camp from BR-12 provided assistance on the Strawberry Valley Project (see <i>Camp BR-5</i>). Enrollees helped out excavating the feeder canal and building two rock masonry emergency spillways and a small diversion dam. Another spike camp from BR-12 was established on the Hyrum Project in Utah and operated for several months each year in 1935 and 1936, and in all of 1937. In the latter year, the enrollees lived in a U.S. Forest Service camp. Work accomplished included construction of a diversion dam on the Little Bear River; riprapping of the spillway channel below Hyrum Dam; construction of a parapet wall, curb walls, and a toe drain on Hyrum Dam; obliteration of borrow pits and unsightly areas in the vicinity of the dam; silting of portions of the Hyrum-Mendon Canal; and construction of a concrete headgate in the canal.</p> <p>Camp BR-12 produced a newsletter called "Canyon Echoes."</p>			

**Camp BR-12, Camp History/Activities (continued)**

By the summer of 1938, Reclamation had discontinued use of BR-12 as a main camp. The U.S. Forest Service expressed interest in occupying Camp BR-12, and it was turned over to that agency on August 1, 1938. In fiscal years 1939 and 1940, a small group of enrollees on detached service from *Camp BR-64* at Heber, Utah, continued work on the Ogden River Project.

**CAMP DESCRIPTION (number/type of buildings)**

Camp BR-12 was constructed on Federal land at the Pineview Reservoir site. Further research is needed to identify the number and types of buildings at BR-12.

**DISPOSITION/CURRENT STATUS**

The disposition of Camp BR-12 after it was turned over to the U.S. Forest Service in August 1938 is unknown.

**SOURCES**

H. T. Cory, "Civilian Conservation Corps Work on Reclamation Projects," *The Reclamation Era* 25 (January 1935), 22-23.

Reclamation, *Annual Project History, Ogden River Project*, 1936, Box 119, Accession No. 8NN-115-90-011, National Archives, Denver.

Reclamation, General Correspondence, Boxes 179, 181, and 183, Entry 7, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

Reclamation, General Records of CCC Activities, Box 11 and Boxes 47 through 49, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

Reclamation, Records of the Supervising Engineer in Charge of Emergency Conservation Work, Box 11, Entry 21, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

**Recorded by: Christine Pfaff, Bureau of Reclamation, Denver, 2009**

## BUREAU OF RECLAMATION CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS STUDY

<b>Camp Number</b>	<b>BR-13</b>	<b>Camp Name</b>	Yuma
<b>State</b>	Arizona	<b>County</b>	Yuma
<b>Location</b>	Yuma Mesa, T. 9 S., R. 23 W., sec. 2, just north of U.S. Highway 80		
<b>Reclamation Project</b>	Yuma	<b>Army Corps Area</b>	8
<b>Date Established</b>	Fall 1935	<b>Date Terminated</b>	May 1942
<b>CAMP HISTORY/ACTIVITIES</b>			
<p>Camp Yuma, BR-13, was one of two CCC camps established on the Yuma Project; the other was <i>Camp BR-74</i>. Construction of Camp BR-13 began in July 1935, and although completed in September, it was not occupied until later that fall. Because of the intense summer heat, the CCC vacated the Yuma camps during the summer months for the first few years. Starting in fiscal year 1939, at least one of the two camps operated year-around. Camp BR-13 remained open throughout the year starting in 1939 and continuing through 1941.</p> <p>Located along the Colorado River in southern Arizona and California, the Yuma Project received authorization for construction in 1904. Original features of the project include Laguna Dam on the Colorado River, the Boundary Pumping Plant, the Siphon Drop Powerplant, and an extensive system of canals, laterals, and drains. By the 1930s, many features of the distribution system had deteriorated. Much of the work accomplished by the CCC consisted of repairing or replacing irrigation structures.</p> <p>The Yuma Project CCC enrollees from both camps contributed greatly to improving and upgrading the distribution system. Work crews mainly replaced worn-out old wood structures with concrete ones, but also added some new features at various locations. During the 1937 season, the CCC replaced 73 wooden turnouts, 22 combination structures, 11 check structures, 4 lateral turnouts, and 2 concrete pipe culverts. Among features completed in 1939 were a new check and wasteway on the West Canal at the 21-mile point in the Valley Division. Enrollees also added two new checks that year in the East Main Canal for better water elevation regulation. During the 1940 season, the CCC replaced 252 wooden structures with reinforced concrete structures. The CCC structures can be identified by the "CCC" mark stamped in the concrete. By the time the camps closed, 855 water control structures had been constructed.</p> <p>Another major CCC work component consisted of lining canals and laterals with concrete. During preparation, pouring, and curing of in-place concrete lining, affected sections of canals and laterals had to be shut down. Since the Yuma climate permitted agricultural activity year round, these closures interfered with the need for continual water delivery. Any interruption of service to conduct maintenance activities created hardships for farmers. Consequently, enrollees installed lining in relatively short sections. This led Reclamation to explore more efficient ways to conduct canal repairs, notably the use of precast concrete slab linings.</p> <p>Reclamation constructed a precast concrete slab plant at the Reclamation headquarters in Yuma. Each 4- by 6-foot slab weighed approximately 600 pounds. The canal being repaired was shut down only for laying the floor, which was done with poured-in-place concrete. Once the floor was laid, the canal could be used to irrigate fields during hours that crews weren't installing slabs. This method considerably reduced the amount of time that a canal segment was out of service. The CCC conducted most of the canal lining between 1940 and 1942.</p>			



### **Camp BR-13, Camp History/Activities (continued)**

Colorado River water diverted into Yuma project canals carried a large amount of silt that periodically had to be removed so that canals could operate properly. Over a period of years, this led to the creation of huge piles of dredged material. CCC enrollees leveled considerable reaches of these “unsightly embankments” by using tractors equipped with bulldozer blades or pulling road graders.

Another CCC effort involved eradicating weeds and gophers. In one year alone (1939), 21,965 gophers were trapped on, or adjacent to, project canals and lateral right-of-ways. During the operation of the Yuma CCC camps, enrollees treated 21,532 acres for the control of rodents and other predatory animals. The CCC also eradicated weeds on 3,222 acres of Government right-of-way and treated 3,552 acres for insect pest control.

Additional work activities included landscaping, constructing at least 140 miles of telephone lines, improving operating roads along canals, and placing pipelines. In 1939, enrollees assisted in constructing a four-room house and garage on the Reclamation grounds in Yuma. After an earthquake shook the area in 1940, CCC enrollees helped repair damages. In 1941, crews spent time clearing brush and trees from the apron of Laguna Dam. Work was slow and difficult because of water constantly flowing over portions of the cleared area.

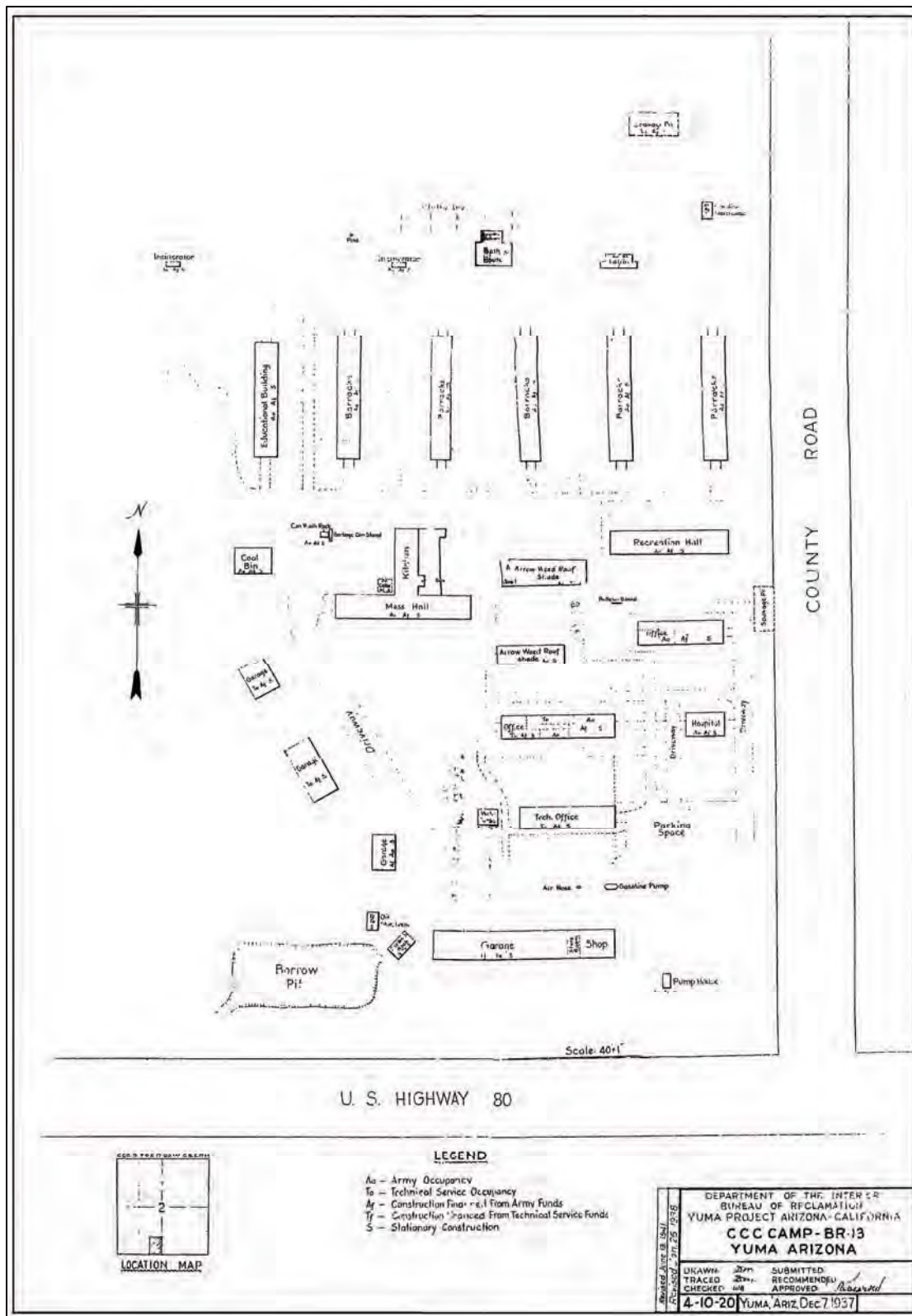
Camp BR-13 accommodated an average of 200 enrollees a year. Aside from their project work, enrollees could take advantage of numerous educational and recreational activities. The young men enjoyed movies, recreational trips, and various sports. A baseball team was organized, and numerous games were played with teams from the local high school, the American Legion, and other organizations. A swimming pool, built adjacent to the project East Main Canal, was a popular diversion. Each evening, trucks provided transport for those who wished to go swimming. Lectures and entertainment were also scheduled throughout the span of the CCC program.

Large numbers of enrollees attended classes during off hours at the well-equipped shop located at the Yuma Project headquarters. Enrollees learned how to use electric welding machines, an acetylene machine, a furnace and casting outfit, lathes, a large shaper, a pneumatic hammer, drill presses, and precision tools. Job instruction classes were another popular choice. Building concrete structures and placing concrete lining required considerable skill, and enrollees were eager to learn. CCC foremen took great care to give proper instruction in handling tools, setting forms, placing screeds, bending and placing reinforcing steel, and finishing and curing concrete. Enrollees built scale models of the structures that were being built on the project. Yuma project employees pitched in and taught some classes such as clerical work and shorthand. Enrollees also took classes to advance their regular schooling. For example, in fiscal year 1939, 25 men received their eighth grade diplomas at a special ceremony arranged for the occasion.

In 1941, with a decreasing number of enrollees at the camp, less work was accomplished. The camp closed for good the following year, on May 7. During its existence, the camp was occupied by various companies including Nos. 835, 2860, 794, and 2833.

## Camp BR-13 (continued)

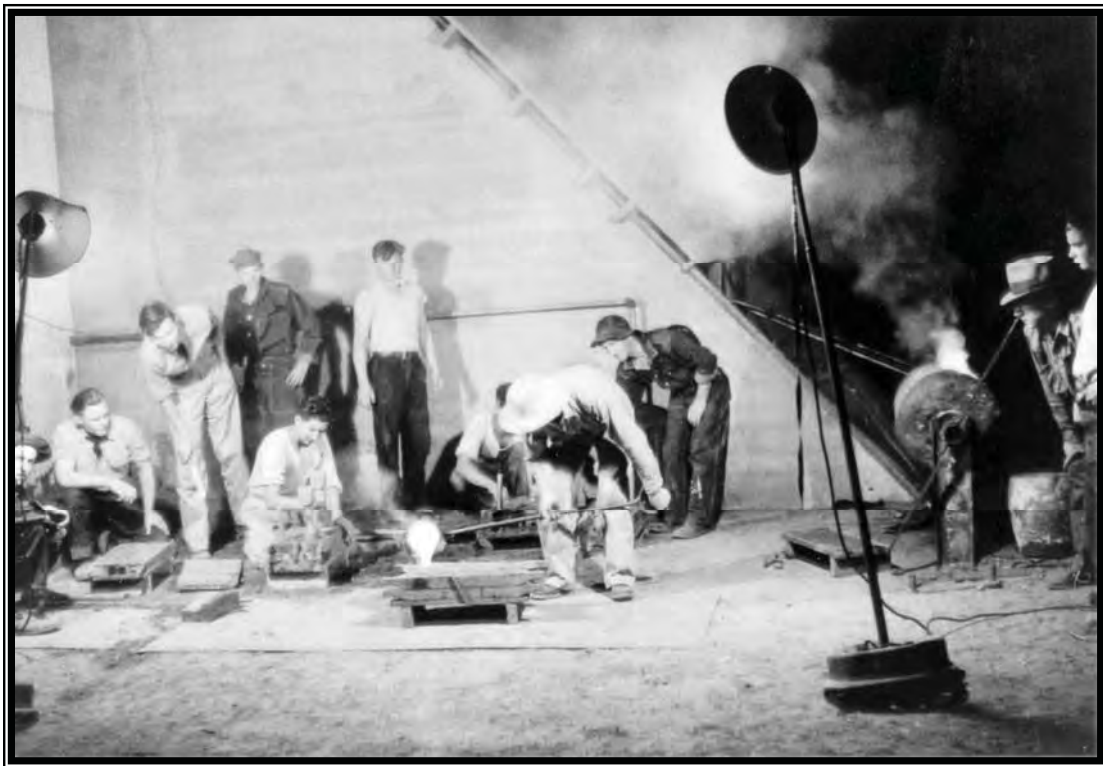
<b>CAMP DESCRIPTION (number/type of buildings)</b>
Camp BR-13 was located on Government withdrawn lands. Buildings were of rigid frame construction. They included five barracks (two that measured 20 feet by 135 feet and three that measured 20 feet by 108 feet), a mess hall and kitchen, an office and supply building, an infirmary, an officers' and foremen's quarters, a recreation hall, a bathhouse, a latrine, a technical service building, seven garages, a pump house, a repair shop, and several smaller service buildings.
<b>DISPOSITION/CURRENT STATUS</b>
Following the camp closure, Camp BR-13 was transferred to the Army. On June 22, 1942, Company "L" No. 364 Infantry occupied the premises. By March 1944, the camp was once again vacant but in good condition. Two additional barracks had been erected by the Army. A small contingent of military police was scheduled to move in soon. Final disposition of the camp is unknown.
<b>SOURCES</b>
Reclamation, <i>Annual Project Histories, Yuma Project</i> , 1936, and 1938 through 1941, Box 364, Accession No. 8NN-115-90-011, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.
Reclamation, General Records of CCC Activities, Boxes 12, 47, 48, and 163, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.
Reclamation, Records of the Supervising Engineer in Charge of Emergency Conservation Work, Boxes 12 and 13, Entry 21, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.
Reclamation, <i>The Historic Yuma Project</i> by Christine Pfaff, Rolla Queen, and David Clark, Denver, Colorado, 1992.
<b>Recorded by: Christine Pfaff, Bureau of Reclamation, Denver, 2009</b>



Camp BR-13: Yuma Project, plan of Camp BR-13, December 7, 1937, revised June 13, 1941 (Box 163, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-13: Yuma Project, view of camp, 1936 (Box 364, Accession No. 8NN-115-90-011, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camps BR-13 and BR-74: Yuma Project, CCC enrollee off-the-job training, foundry class at headquarters shops, pouring molten bronze into molds, July 12, 1939 (Box 22, Accession No. 8NS-115-95-112, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-13: Yuma Project, placing precast concrete slabs in Woods Lateral, September 20, 1939 (Box 1, Entry 31, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-13: Yuma Project, concrete precast slabs placed in Woods Lateral, September 20, 1939 (Box 1, Entry 31, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-13: Yuma Project, raising concrete lining, B-8 Lateral, Yuma Mesa, March 15, 1940 (Box 1, Entry 31, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).

## BUREAU OF RECLAMATION CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS STUDY

<b>Camp Number</b>	<b>BR-14 and BR-19</b>	<b>Camp Name</b>	Tempe
<b>State</b>	Arizona	<b>County</b>	Maricopa
<b>Location</b>	Near Papago Park		
<b>Reclamation Project</b>	Salt River	<b>Army Corps Area</b>	8
<b>Date Established</b>	BR-14: October 23, 1935 BR-19: October 24, 1935	<b>Date Terminated</b>	BR-14: June 2, 1937 BR-19: March 31, 1938

### **CAMP HISTORY/ACTIVITIES**

During the summer of 1935, the Army directed the construction of two CCC camps on the Salt River Project, one of the first five Reclamation projects authorized for construction in March 1903. The Tempe camps, BR-14 and BR-19, were located about 8 miles east of Phoenix, near Papago Park, in the vicinity of Tempe. Camp BR-19 was situated about 3 miles north of Tempe, and BR-14 was about 4 miles north.

Camp BR-14 was first occupied at the end of October 1935 by enrollees of Company No. 805. They began fieldwork in mid-November and continued until the beginning of June 1936, when the camp shut down for the summer. From October 13, 1936, to June 2, 1937, Company No. 2864 continued the work performed by the previous enrollees. Thereafter, the camp ceased operations. Camp BR-19 also opened in late October 1935. Members of Company No. 2544 first occupied the camp, but in late January 1936, they were replaced with Company No. 2849, consisting of young men from Arizona and Texas. Both camps were permanently abandoned at the end of March 1938.

Work done by the CCC forces consisted of the replacement and betterment of a wide variety of irrigation structures throughout the Salt River irrigation project, which covered an area of about 242,000 acres around Phoenix. Enrollees restored canals and laterals to their original dimensions, lined waterways to facilitate the flow of water, built or rebuilt about 275 miles of roads for the use of ditchriders, placed rock riprap along canal banks to prevent erosion, replaced old wooden irrigation and drainage structures with concrete, and installed precast concrete pipe.

To enable enrollees to carry out the construction program, a variety of buildings was needed. At Camp BR-19, an area for buildings was graded, surfaced, and fenced. As funds became available, enrollees added an office, adobe warehouse for cement storage, garage, blacksmith shop, carpenter shop, oil house, wash rack and greasing rack, gasoline and oil station, and various sheds. In addition to these facilities, a sand and gravel processing plant was built in the river bottom south of Tempe.

A notable accomplishment of the camp enrollees was the manufacture of concrete pipe. A plant was established at Camp BR-19 with the ability to cast 18-inch, 24-inch, 30-inch, and 36-inch pipe. A curing yard equipped with revolving sprinklers adjoined the casting floor, and beyond the yard fence, 10 acres of ground were leveled off and used for storage. The plant manufactured about 44,000 linear feet of pipe of all sizes during the operation of the camps. The product made by the enrollees compared very favorably with commercial pipe. Over 35,000 linear feet of concrete pipe were laid by enrollees at both camps.

Additional accomplishments of the CCC forces included the construction of 4 miles of fencing, 12 dwellings (not for CCC use), 2 other buildings (not for CCC use), and the eradication of



### **Camps BR-14 and BR-19, Camp History/Activities (continued)**

60,000 gophers. To achieve all this, the enrollees made use of 35 trucks, 3 tractors, 8 concrete mixers, and 4 log sawing machines, among other equipment.

Engineers from the Salt River Valley Water Users' Association (SRVWUA) developed descriptions, plans, estimates, and locations for all work contemplated by the camps. At the beginning of each week, staff from the association's Water Department and the camp superintendent met to select work for the week that best fit in with water delivery schedules, the location of the work, and the number of enrollees available, which averaged about 162 over both camps' nearly 3-year existence. The SRVWUA provided large amounts of cement, lumber, and other materials, and also furnished 8 to 12 skilled carpenters and truck mechanics.

On Saturdays, CCC enrollees could attend a number of off-the-job training classes in subjects like civil engineering, house building, welding, blue print reading, metal art craft, truck driving, first aid, safety, and gas engines. The camp's technical personnel taught the classes with assistance provided by the camp educational adviser and other experts from the Arizona State Teachers' College at Tempe. A number of enrollees even pursued college credits. The camp received praise for its fine educational program.

For recreation, enrollees had the opportunity to engage in various sports, dances, and lectures.

Cooperation among Reclamation, the Salt River Valley Water Users' Association, the Army, and the enrollees was praised as excellent. James J. Lane, the CCC project superintendent throughout the lifespan of the two camps, was credited with much of this success.

### **CAMP DESCRIPTION (number/type of buildings)**

Camp BR-14 was of the all-year permanent type and consisted of four barracks with the "usual accessory structures."

Camp BR-19, located on land owned by the Salt River Valley Water Users' Association, was the larger of the two camps and also of the all-year permanent type. Buildings included: five 20-foot by 104-foot barracks, an infirmary (20 feet by 33 feet), an office with supply room (20 feet by 73 feet), an office (17 feet by 20 feet), officers' quarters (20 feet by 97 feet), a mess hall (20 feet by 121 feet), bath house (20 feet by 30 feet), recreation hall (20 feet by 100 feet), latrine (14 feet by 20 feet), photo dark room (10 feet by 12 feet), open front garage (14 feet by 20 feet), open front garage-shop (20 feet by 100 feet), tool room (12 feet by 20 feet), open front storeroom (16 feet by 27 feet), adobe storeroom (16 feet by 35 feet), oilhouse (10 feet by 12 feet), and water tank.

### **DISPOSITION/CURRENT STATUS**

Following closure of the camps, Reclamation declared that it had no further use for the properties and requested salvage of both camps, including all buildings and fixtures, by the Army for CCC use elsewhere. The request was approved for Camp BR-14 on April 12, 1938, and for Camp BR-19 on May 17, 1938. By June 30, 1938, the buildings had been dismantled, and all equipment and materials were moved to other projects or otherwise disposed of in accordance with regulations.

## Camps BR-14 and BR-19 (continued)

### SOURCES

“Official Annual – 1936, Phoenix District, 8<sup>th</sup> Corps Area, Civilian Conservation Corps,” printed by Direct Advertising Company, October 1936.

Reclamation, General Records of CCC Activities, Boxes 11, 47, and 49, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

Reclamation, Monthly Work Progress Reports, Box 5, Entry 26, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

Reclamation, Records of the Supervising Engineer in Charge of Emergency Conservation Work, “Final Report of Construction Projects by the CCC, BR-14 and 19,” Entry 21, RG 115, Archival Research Catalog Identifier 293610, National Archives, Denver.

**Recorded by: Christine Pfaff, Bureau of Reclamation, Denver, 2009**



Camp BR-19: Salt River Project, view of camp, 1938 (Box 143, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).

Camp BR-14: Salt River Project, detail of CCC enrollees leaving for work project: note steps used for loading, seating arrangement, and closed tool boxes, March 22, 1937 (Box 15, Accession No. 8NS-115-95-112, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-14: Salt River Project, removable tool boxes that are also used for seats in trucks, March 23, 1937 (Box 15, Accession No. 8NS-115-95-112, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-14 and BR-19: Salt River Project, Tempe Canal, Lateral 4, new gates, 1936 (Box 143, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-19: Salt River Project, replacing old wooden turnout with concrete one, December 16, 1937 (Box 143, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).





Camp BR-19: Salt River Project, manufacturing concrete pipe, 1937 (Box 143, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-19: Salt River Project, gasoline driven concrete vibrator, January 26, 1937 (Box 15, Accession No. 8NS-115-95-112, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-14 and BR-19:  
Salt River Project, new  
Eastern Canal gate  
structure, date unknown  
(Box 143, Entry 22,  
RG 115, National  
Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-14 and BR-19: Salt River Project, gates near  
105<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Lower Buckeye, 2000 (photo by Richard  
Boston, Bureau of Reclamation).



Camp BR-14 and BR-19: Salt River  
Project, CCC stamp in concrete, 2000  
(photo by Richard Boston, Bureau of  
Reclamation).



## BUREAU OF RECLAMATION CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS STUDY

<b>Camp Number</b>	<b>BR-17 and BR-18</b>	<b>Camp Name</b>	Topock
<b>State</b>	Arizona	<b>County</b>	Mohave
<b>Location</b>	North of Parker Dam in Topock		
<b>Reclamation Project</b>	Parker Dam	<b>Army Corps Area</b>	8
<b>Date Established</b>	November 6, 1935	<b>Date Terminated</b>	BR-17: December 31, 1935? BR-18: April 30, 1936
<b>CAMP HISTORY/ACTIVITIES</b>			
<p>Two CCC camps, BR-17 and BR-18, were established to aid in the construction of Parker Dam on the Colorado River. The dam, built by Reclamation and paid for by the Metropolitan Water District of southern California, stores water in Lake Havasu for use by Los Angeles and its greater metropolitan area. Water is delivered from the lake to southern California through the Colorado River Aqueduct. Parker Dam also provides flood control for the mouth of the Bill Williams River, as well as water and storage for the Colorado River Indian Reservation and the Parker-Gila Project.</p> <p>Construction of the dam started in late 1934, and Government and contractor camps were established close to the dam site. The CCC camps were located further upstream in Topock. Company No. 1849 occupied Camp BR-17 on November 6, 1935; Company No. 2833 occupied Camp BR-18 on that same date. The CCC forces completed 574 acres of clearing at the Parker Dam reservoir site. They also maintained 7.5 miles of operating road.</p> <p>Both Topock camps operated only a short time until completion of the reservoir clearing. The final progress report for Camp BR-17 indicates that field work ceased on December 31, 1935. Camp BR-18 shut down on April 30, 1936.</p>			
<b>CAMP DESCRIPTION (number/type of buildings)</b>			
Camp buildings were all temporary in nature and included headquarters, barracks, two storehouses, two shops, and other facilities.			
<b>DISPOSITION/CURRENT STATUS</b>			
The buildings at both camps were dismantled. Two storehouses and two shop buildings, all of corrugated sheet metal, were taken apart and transported in October 1937 for use at Camp <b>BR-74</b> in Yuma. Apparently, one set of barracks was also moved to the Yuma camp.			
<b>SOURCES</b>			
<p>Reclamation, <i>Annual Project Histories, Parker Dam Project California-Arizona</i>, 1934-35, Box 440, Entry 10, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.</p> <p>Reclamation, Monthly Work Progress Reports, Box 5, Entry 26, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.</p> <p>Reclamation, General Records of CCC Activities, Boxes 11 and 47, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.</p> <p><b>Recorded by: Christine Pfaff, Bureau of Reclamation, Denver, 2009</b></p>			

## BUREAU OF RECLAMATION CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS STUDY

<b>Camp Number</b>	<b>BR-20</b>	<b>Camp Name</b>	Tulelake
<b>State</b>	California	<b>County</b>	Siskiyou
<b>Location</b>	Five miles west of Tulelake; west side of Hill Road, T. 48 N., R. 3 E., sec. 25		
<b>Reclamation Project</b>	Klamath	<b>Army Corps Area</b>	9
<b>Date Established</b>	October 20, 1935	<b>Date Terminated</b>	July 1, 1938
<b>CAMP HISTORY/ACTIVITIES</b>			
<p>Camp Tulelake, BR-20, was one of two Reclamation camps established on the Klamath Project; the other was <i>Camp BR-41</i>. The Klamath Project received authorization by the Secretary of the Interior on May 15, 1905. Construction began the following year, and upon completion, the project brought water to about 240,000 acres of cropland in south-central Oregon and north-central California. By the early 1930s, the irrigation system required rehabilitation, and both camps assigned to the Klamath Project were engaged in that task. The director of the Emergency Conservation Works (renamed CCC) approved the occupation of both camps in April 1935 pending an investigation of the sites by Army inspectors. Apparently, a third camp on the Klamath Project, <i>BR-40</i>, was approved for Bend, Oregon, but was never built.</p> <p>In June 1935, an advance group of civilian crews, a foreman, carpenters, and plumbers started camp construction. To provide assistance, a contingent of enrollees, first from Company No. 2514 and then from Company No. 1910, served as cooks, drivers, laborers, and administrative personnel. Reclamation supplied all of the necessary trucks and heavy equipment.</p> <p>The camp officially began operation on October 20, 1935. That day, 133 CCC enrollees of Company No. 544 from Fort Knox, Kentucky, arrived by truck at Tulelake from Merrill, Oregon. They were under the supervision of Captain W. C. Dittmore and Lieutenant C. G. Beggs. According to the camp report for the sixth enrollment period (October 1935 through March 1936), "The men arrived in good condition and in good spirits. They immediately began arranging to make themselves comfortable in camp. Furnaces had already been placed in the barracks and other buildings and, although the weather was quite cold, the men were comfortable. The following day the men were put to work cleaning up and getting the camp in shape for permanent occupancy. It was only a day later when the Captain turned over a portion of the men to the Acting Camp Superintendent for the commencement of field work."</p> <p>In late April 1936, Company No. 544 moved to Camp Lava Beds in Merrill, Oregon. Camp BR-20 was temporarily abandoned and then reoccupied on October 19, 1936, this time by Company No. 3866, consisting of young men from southern Texas. In December 1937, Company No. 3866 moved out, and Company No. 1578 occupied the camp until July 1, 1938. At that time, the entire company transferred to Reclamation's <i>Camp BR-78</i> on the Orland Project in California.</p> <p>Camp BR-20 was located 1 mile from the headquarters of the Tule Lake National Wildlife Refuge, managed by the U.S. Biological Survey (now the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service). During its entire existence as a Reclamation camp, BR-20 was run on a cooperative basis with that agency. When Reclamation relocated its enrollees to the Orland Project, the U.S. Biological Survey assumed control of the camp.</p> <p>The work accomplished by both Reclamation CCC camps assigned to the Klamath Project did much to improve its condition. Activities included the construction of concrete and timber water control</p>			

### **Camp BR-20, Camp History/Activities (continued)**

structures; concrete lining and riprapping of canals to prevent excessive loss of water and channel erosion; building of minor roads on canal banks; excavation of lateral and drain ditches; construction of vehicle bridges across channels; removal of weeds from canal, lateral, and drain ditch banks; and, prior to June 30, 1937, cleaning and clearing of channels and the eradication of rodents. Both camps intermittently participated in emergency work and fighting forest fires in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service. Camp BR-20 enrollees also constructed over 11 miles of telephone lines and built fencing along canal right-of-ways. Enrollees from Camp BR-20 also contributed to improvements at the Tule Lake National Wildlife Refuge. Historic photographs depict the young men laying rock walls at the headquarters building.

Enrollees at Camps BR-20 and *BR-41* received praise for their hard work. The sixth enrollment period report for the camps provided the following description: “The manner in which the men in both camps applied their efforts was truly remarkable, and it was not long before the camps became well established and the work program began to show signs of progress . . . They wanted to work, to prove their worth and better themselves, when given the opportunity. Moreover, they proved this when offered the facilities of the buildings and teaching personnel at the Merrill and Tulelake high schools for evenings.”

Many interested enrollees signed up to take night classes such as typing, shorthand, English, math, citizenship, penmanship, and journalism. Some of the young men, who had never even had the opportunity to complete grade school, greatly advanced their education. For those who did not attend classes at the high schools, there were also courses taught at each camp. The young men received instruction in first aid, orchestra practice, and safety at work, in addition to the regular curriculum of English, arithmetic, typing, shorthand, and journalism courses, among others.

According to the seventh enrollment period report for the camps, committees on education, safety, religion, recreation, and camp discipline were organized with the express purpose of improving the “camp life, intelligence and well being of the men.”

### **CAMP DESCRIPTION (number/type of buildings)**

Camp Tulelake consisted of 23 major buildings and assorted auxiliary structures grouped within a rectangular plan. Administrative offices, living quarters, a mess hall, and a hospital ward were grouped around a large courtyard that was intersected by rock-lined walkways. A flagpole was positioned in the center of the courtyard. The service area and related structures were located south of the courtyard. The service area included six large storage or garage buildings, several small machine and equipment storage sheds, a gas pump and oil house, and grease and wash racks. Buildings were added as the camp evolved under its existence as U.S. Biological Survey Camp BF-3. Additions included a pump house and portable barrack in the summer of 1939, and a concrete pad tennis court in 1940.

### **DISPOSITION/CURRENT STATUS**

Once Reclamation ceased to occupy Camp BR-20, it was taken over by the U.S. Biological Survey. The camp was redesignated Camp Tulelake BF-3; and on July 8, 1938, members of Company No. 5486 arrived there from Camp BF-1 in Clear Lake, California. The camp operated until the termination of the CCC program in the summer of 1942. The buildings were left in place.

After closure of the camp, it remained vacant until January 1943, when the War Relocation Authority appropriated the camp for short-term use as housing for “disloyal” Japanese-American citizens interred

### **Camp BR-20, Disposition/Current Status (continued)**

at the Tule Lake Relocation Center. The men were moved out of the camp in the spring of 1943, and it was again abandoned, this time for a year. In the spring of 1944, the War Department selected the site of Camp BR-20 to house German World War II prisoners. By October 1944, 800 prisoners occupied the camp. In May 1946, the War Department returned custody of the camp to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which continues to own the property today.

Three buildings still remain at the site of Camp BR-20: a barracks, a mess hall, and a shop. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is currently rehabilitating the barracks building.

### **SOURCES**

“Camp Tulelake,” Historic American Building Survey No. CA-2683, prepared by Lou Ann Speulda, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, September 1997.

“Camp BR-20, Klamath Project,” draft article for *The Reclamation Era*, Box 36, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

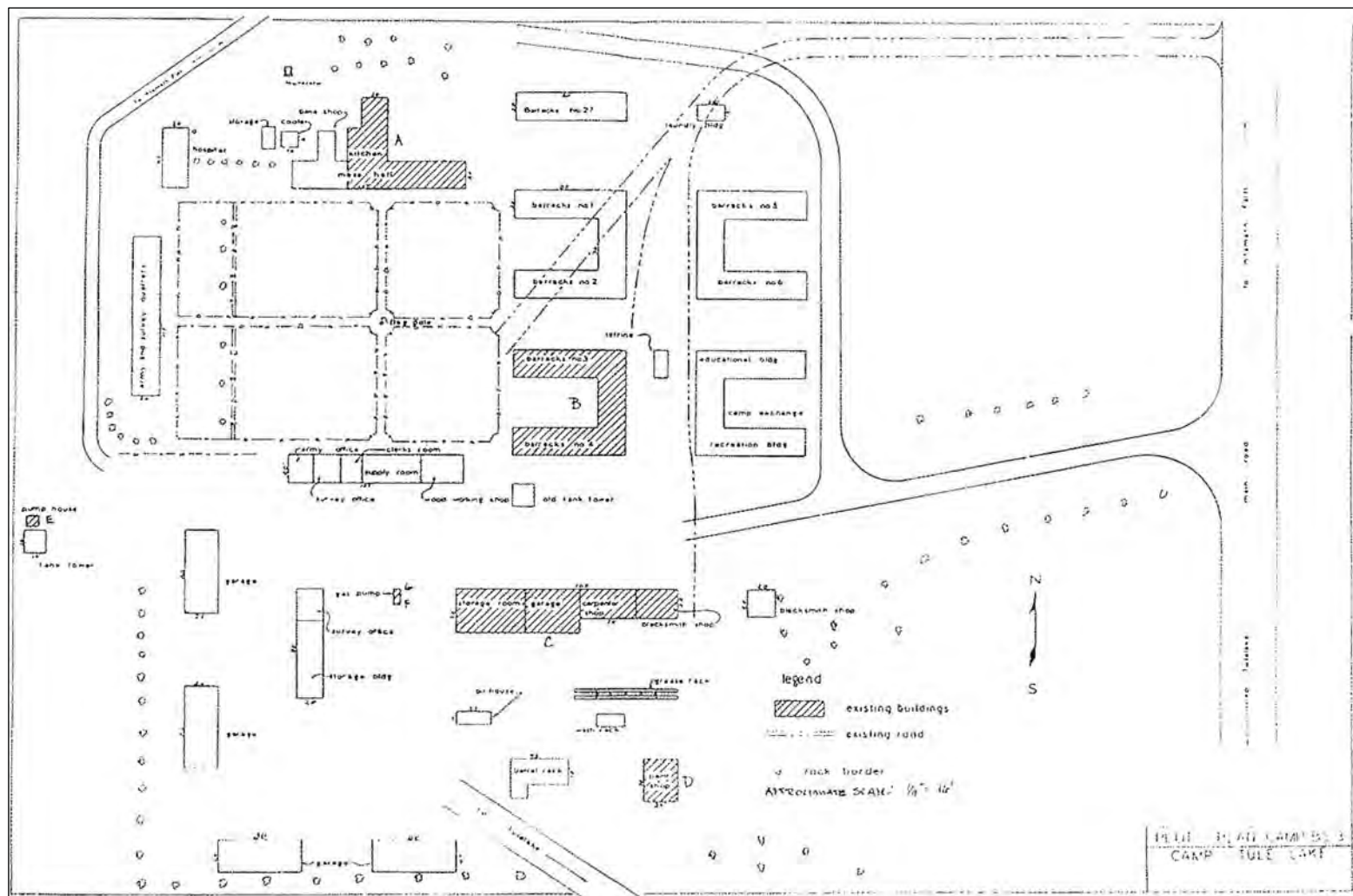
Klamath Project CCC Period Reports on file at Klamath Office, Bureau of Reclamation.

Reclamation, *Annual Project Histories, Klamath Project*, 1935, 1936, and 1937, Box 61, Entry 10, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

Reclamation, General Administrative and Project Records 1930-1945, Box 179, Entry 7, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

Reclamation, General Records of CCC Activities, Boxes 11, 36, 47, and 48, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

**Recorded by: Christine Pfaff, Bureau of Reclamation, Denver, 2009**



Camp BR-20: Klamath Project, camp site plan ("Camp Tule Lake," Historic American Building Survey No. CA-2683).



Camp BR-20: Klamath Project, view of camp, March 7, 1940 (courtesy of Lou Ann Speulda-Drews, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service).



Camp BR-20: Klamath Project, CCC enrollees lining J Canal near Bloody Point, 1937 (Box 161, Entry 10, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).





Camp BR-20: Klamath Project, concrete lining constructed by CCC enrollees at head of J-1 Lateral, 1937 (Box 61, Entry 10, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-20: Klamath Project, rock wall construction at wildlife refuge headquarters, date unknown (Box 1, Entry 31, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-20: Klamath Project, view of wildlife refuge headquarters showing rock wall construction, date unknown (Box 1, Entry 31, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-20: Klamath Project, remaining CCC buildings with barracks in center, 2007 (courtesy of Lou Ann Speulda-Drews, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service).



Camp BR-20: Klamath Project, barracks building undergoing rehabilitation, June 2007 (courtesy of Lou Ann Speulda-Drews, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service).



Camp BR-20: Klamath Project, interior of barracks building, June 2007 (courtesy of Lou Ann Speulda-Drews, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service).



## BUREAU OF RECLAMATION CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS STUDY

<b>Camp Number</b>	<b>BR-21</b>	<b>Camp Name</b>	Tahoe
<b>State</b>	California	<b>County</b>	Placer
<b>Location</b>	Adjacent to Tahoe City, T. 15 N., R. 17 E., NW1/4 NW1/4 sec. 7		
<b>Reclamation Project</b>	Newlands	<b>Army Corps Area</b>	9
<b>Date Established</b>	July 1935	<b>Date Terminated</b>	November 1935
<b>CAMP HISTORY/ACTIVITIES</b>			
<p>During the summer of 1935, three CCC camps were built on the Newlands Project: BR-21, <i>BR-34</i>, and <i>BR-35</i>. Reclamation requested the camps for the purpose of rehabilitating and enlarging the Newlands Project, one of the first five Reclamation projects authorized under the Reclamation Act of 1902. The project provides water to lands in the west-central Nevada counties of Churchill, Lyon, Storey, and Washoe. Project water comes from Lake Tahoe, which lies on the California/Nevada border; the Truckee River, which drains Lake Tahoe; and the Carson River. Since December 31, 1926, the project had been operated and maintained by the Truckee-Carson Irrigation District. By the mid-1930s, the irrigation district and its users faced dire financial straits and lacked funding to care for project irrigation and drainage works. Many of the water control and conveyance structures had fallen into disrepair, and existing storage had proven inadequate.</p> <p>Camp Tahoe, BR-21, located adjacent to Tahoe City, California, was established as a summer camp. It occupied land in a pine forest on the shores of scenic Lake Tahoe. The Army began camp construction on June 13, 1935, and on July 24, 1935, 180 enrollees from Company No. 258 arrived from Waterford, Mississippi, to occupy the new facility. Sixteen Local Experienced Men joined them. The work force made numerous repairs and improvements to structures connected with the Lake Tahoe outlet gates, and cleared and cleaned the outlet channel and adjoining land. The enrollees also provided valuable assistance at the proposed Boca Dam site (feature of the Truckee Storage Project authorized in 1935) in connection with the test pit, road construction, and other preliminary work.</p> <p>Two days after reaching Camp Tahoe, a detachment of 30 men from Company No. 258 left for Reno, Nevada, where a spike camp was established for the purpose of constructing Camp Reno, <i>BR-37</i>, on the Truckee Storage Project. The enrollees completed the new camp on November 11, 1935, at which time the rest of the CCC forces at BR-21 transferred there. The abandoned summer camp was turned over to the custody of Reclamation, which hired a caretaker paid from CCC funds to keep watch over the site.</p> <p>In April 1938, Reclamation requested permission to salvage materials from the camp for use at a CCC side camp in Boca, California (see <i>Camp BR-92</i>). The CCC granted permission on April 15, 1938.</p>			
<b>CAMP DESCRIPTION (number/type of buildings)</b>			
Camp BR-21 was located on Federal lands. The camp was of the usual summer tent type and included a mess hall, with accompanying small buildings.			
<b>DISPOSITION/CURRENT STATUS</b>			
The camp was dismantled for use at a side camp in Boca, California.			

## Camp BR-21 (continued)

### SOURCES

Civilian Conservation Corps, "Official Annual," Sacramento District, Ninth Corps Area, 1938, National Association of CCC Alumni, St. Louis, Missouri.

Reclamation, *Annual Project Histories, Truckee Storage Project*, 1934 through 1937, Box 564, Entry 10, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

Reclamation, General Records of CCC Activities, Boxes 11 and 47, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

**Recorded by: Christine Pfaff, Bureau of Reclamation, Denver, 2009**

## BUREAU OF RECLAMATION CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS STUDY

<b>Camp Number</b>	<b>BR-22</b>	<b>Camp Name</b>	Grand Junction
<b>State</b>	Colorado	<b>County</b>	Mesa
<b>Location</b>	About 1 mile east of Grand Junction, east of Lincoln Park		
<b>Reclamation Project</b>	Grand Valley	<b>Army Corps Area</b>	8
<b>Date Established</b>	July 27, 1935	<b>Date Terminated</b>	May 29, 1942
<b>CAMP HISTORY/ACTIVITIES</b>			
<p>Camp Grand Junction, BR-22, was one of two CCC camps established on the Grand Valley Project; the other was <i>Camp BR-59</i>. Construction of Camp BR-22 began July 2, 1935, on land belonging to the city of Grand Junction, located about 1 mile east of that city on Highway 24. The camp was occupied later that month by newly formed Company No. 2803. The nucleus of that company consisted of a cadre of 12 men who arrived at the camp on July 23, 1935, from Fruita, Colorado. They were joined several days later by 189 men from Tulsa, Oklahoma, under the command of Captain L.L. Chambers, and on August 5 and 6, by 16 Local Experienced Men. During the next week, the men were issued clothing, received typhoid shots and smallpox vaccinations, and completed other camp processing requirements. Thereafter, the enrollees began project work under Reclamation's Technical Supervisor, T.L. Sundquist.</p> <p>By the 1930s, the Grand Valley Project's aging irrigation system required attention. Construction of the project had been authorized by the Secretary of the Interior on September 23, 1912, after a series of lengthy delays. Features included the Grand Valley Diversion Dam, a powerplant, two pumping plants, two canal systems totaling 90 miles, over 160 miles of laterals, and 113 miles of drains. Both Grand Valley CCC camps focused on rehabilitating the irrigation system. Camp BR-22 performed most of its work on the lower end of the project, and <i>BR-59</i> enrollees spent most of their time on the upper division that extended from the Grand Valley Diversion Dam to the Grand Junction airport.</p> <p>Primary accomplishments of both camps included replacing outdated and broken wooden water control structures with concrete ones, lining canals and laterals with concrete to stop seepage, and installing drain pipes to relieve land saturated with high ground water levels. Some of the pipes were placed to a depth of 14 feet. CCC enrollees constructed or reconstructed a total of 2,271 water control structures and installed 120,969 square yards of concrete lining. The latter work was considered especially important because it benefited peach orchards, a valuable crop in the Grand Valley. A 1937 report on Reclamation's CCC activities praised the concrete lining accomplished by enrollees: "The camps have performed wonderfully well in this work, and the class of work accomplished by the enrollees compares very favorably with like work placed under contract. Work of this nature is very hard, but it is the most popular work performed by the boys in these camps, and results in many of them developing into real concrete men and obtaining employment elsewhere." (Civilian Conservation Corps 1937).</p> <p>The list of other CCC achievements on the Grand Valley Project included constructing a 7-foot by 7-foot concrete siphon on the Main Canal; installing a generator at the Grand Valley Diversion Dam; maintaining Applegate Siphon; constructing eight bridges on the canal bank road, to span the large gulches rising in the Bookcliffs; clearing and cleaning canals; riprapping canals and laterals with either rock or brush; constructing canal maintenance roads; and refurbishing or relocating telephone lines. Enrollees also eradicated poisonous and noxious weeds such as water hemlock, whorl-milkweed, and Russian thistle; and eliminated rodents, mainly prairie dogs. Crews from Camp BR-22 refurbished a</p>			



### **Camp BR-22, Camp History/Activities (continued)**

dwelling at Reclamation Maintenance Camp 7 and one from Camp 6 that was moved 2 miles west of Little Salt Wash. They also constructed a new combined project shop/warehouse building to replace a temporary one located on leased land. The diversity of work experience offered the enrollees an unusual opportunity to become excellent truck drivers, mechanics, clerks, rough carpenters, mixer operators, rock masons, and landscaping specialists.

As at other camps, enrollees had opportunities to participate in educational and recreational activities. Classes offered at Camp BR-22 included first aid, math, reading, penmanship, journalism, woodworking, leather work, typing, bookkeeping, and music, among others. Eligible enrollees could continue their education by taking classes at Mesa Junior College for a nominal tuition fee. The camp's traveling and permanent library provided ample reading materials for the enrollees. They could relax in the comfortable ambiance of a reading room equipped with "beautiful furniture, floor lamps and rug." On-the-job practical training offered by Reclamation staff included pouring, placing, and finishing concrete; correct placement of weirs and turnouts; backfilling and puddling structures; and the use and care of trucks and other equipment.

The recreation hall was equipped with reading, writing, card, pool, and ping pong tables; a piano; and a well-stocked magazine rack. Every week, enrollees could attend motion pictures shown at the camp. Field trips provided the young men with opportunities to enjoy the surrounding scenery at places such as Grand Mesa and Colorado National Monument. Camp enrollees also participated in a variety of athletics including wrestling, basketball, baseball, and boxing. In 1937, the young men built a camp tennis court so they could enjoy that sport as well. A newsletter produced by Camp BR-22 enrollees, entitled "The Cotton Pickers Revue," contained information on camp activities. In an issue published in July 1938, the writer lamented, "What this company needs is more dances. Since last October we have had but two shindigs of this nature, and the dancing men are getting itching feet again." Despite this lament, records indicate that enrollees maintained good morale throughout the camp's existence.

During the first year of the camp's existence, enrollees spruced up its appearance by planting trees, grass, flowers, and shrubs; painting the building interiors in pastel colors and the exteriors green with white trim; and hanging pictures in the mess hall and recreation hall. The camp roads were graded and resurfaced, which further contributed to Camp BR-22's neat appearance.

When W. J. Chiesman, Reclamation's Regional Director in Grand Junction, received word that the CCC intended to close the camp in May 1942, he fired off a telegram to the commissioner, urging that the termination date be extended. Chiesman wrote that closure would make it "impossible to complete work now open which must be completed in order to give necessary water service. Unable to get help on the project as the young men are in the army and men remaining must farm at this time of year." The camp's closure was put off until May 29, 1942; thereafter, the occupants, Company No. 2803, prepared for departure to an unidentified CCC camp in the Northwest.

### **CAMP DESCRIPTION (number/type of buildings)**

The camp consisted of a headquarters building, 5 barracks housing 40 men each, a recreation hall, mess hall, technical building, and an 8-foot by 10-foot building used for storing oil and housing the gasoline pump. In 1938, the technical building was remodeled for use as an infirmary, and an educational building measuring 20 feet by 80 feet was constructed by the enrollees as part of the educational program.

## Camp BR-22 (continued)

### DISPOSITION/CURRENT STATUS

In the fall of 1942, Camp BR-22 was transferred to the Army for use as a motor repair shop and school. In the summer of 1943, CCC Director James McEntee approved the transfer of the property from the War Department back to Reclamation for final disposition. A note in the chronology of important events for the Grand Valley Project included in the 1944 *Annual Project History* states: "One hundred Mexican Nationals arrived for farm labor. Housed at BR-22."

### SOURCES

Civilian Conservation Corps, Office of the Director, "A Report Covering the Activities of CCC Camps Assigned to Reclamation Projects in Fourteen Western States, August 1934-May 31, 1937," July 1937, Box 180, Entry 7, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

"History of Civilian Conservation Corps in Colorado, Littleton District - Grand Junction District," compiled by L.A. Gleyre and C.N. Alleger, Denver, Colorado, Press of the Western Newspaper Union, Summer 1936.

Reclamation, *Annual Project Histories, Grand Valley Project*, 1936 through 1941, and 1944, Box 320, Accession No. 8NN-115-90-011, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

"Reclamation Bureau's CCC Camps Accomplishing Much on West Slope," *The Daily Sentinel*, January 1, 1939.

Reclamation, General Records of CCC Activities, Boxes 12, 13, 47, 48, 98, and 99, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

Reclamation, Records of the Supervising Engineer in Charge of Emergency Conservation Work, Box 20, Entry 21, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

**Recorded by: Christine Pfaff, Bureau of Reclamation, Denver, 2009**



Camp BR-22: Grand Valley Project, ditchrider's residence, ride No. 3, reconstructed by CCC; also, test plot of brome grass and crested wheat (Box 320, Accession No. 8NN-115-90-011, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-22: Grand Valley Project, angledozer widening canal banks near Palisade for road purposes, 1938 (Box 320, Accession No. 8NN-115-90-011, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).

## BUREAU OF RECLAMATION CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS STUDY

<b>Camp Number</b>	<b>BR-23 and BR-71</b>	<b>Camp Name</b>	Montrose
<b>State</b>	Colorado	<b>County</b>	Montrose
<b>Location</b>	BR-23: ½ mile northwest of Montrose, adjacent to U.S. Highway 50 BR-71: Adjacent to BR-23		
<b>Reclamation Project</b>	Uncompahgre	<b>Army Corps Area</b>	8
<b>Date Established</b>	BR-23: July 1935 BR-71: July 1938	<b>Date Terminated</b>	BR-23: May 1942 BR-71: October 1941

### CAMP HISTORY/ACTIVITIES

The CCC approved two regular camps, Camp Montrose, BR-23 and BR-71, as well as at least two side camps, for the purpose of making improvements to the Uncompahgre Project, one of the first five Reclamation projects authorized under the Reclamation Act of 1902. Construction began in 1905, and when finally completed, the project features included Taylor Park Dam and Reservoir, the Gunnison Tunnel, 7 diversion dams, 128 miles of main canals, 438 miles of laterals, and 216 miles of drains. The systems divert water from the Uncompahgre and Gunnison rivers to serve over 76,000 acres of project land.

Construction of Camp BR-23, the first CCC camp on the Uncompahgre Project, started on June 28, 1935, and was completed on August 1, just 1 day after the arrival of First Lieutenant August C. Carlson and 189 new enrollees from Ardmore and Sulphur, Oklahoma. On August 8, 1935, 16 Local Experienced Men joined the group. The arrival of additional enrollees from Oklahoma on August 10 and 11 filled the camp to a capacity of 214 men. At the beginning of October 1935, Lieutenant Roy D. Justice replaced August Carlson as the company commander. As was typical, transitions in operating personnel and enrollees continued throughout the life of the camp.

Within the first year, improvements made at the camp were “pushed to the limit to give the men a more satisfied feeling as to home comforts: big easy chairs, writing desks, pool table, magazine racks and pictures on the walls, curtains on the windows, library books and magazines, and plenty of games in the recreation hall; also the camp site has been improved, trees planted, slab rock walks laid and a new baseball diamond laid out on ground which was cleared of all brush by the entire company.” (“History of the Civilian Conservation Corps in Colorado,” 1936) Enrollees built a stone gateway to mark the entrance to the camp.

In July 1938, the CCC established a second camp, BR-71, at a site adjoining Camp BR-23 previously occupied by the Division of Grazing (later renamed the Grazing Service). The 177 enrollees at the new camp belonged to Company No. 3843.

Work accomplished by the CCC consisted mainly of rehabilitating the irrigation system. With almost 600 miles of canals and laterals, an unlimited amount of needed repairs kept the enrollees fully occupied. They replaced old wooden water control structures with reinforced concrete, or concrete and rock structures, riprapped canals and laterals to curtail erosion, placed large sandstone boulders along the banks of the Uncompahgre River above canal headgates to protect them during floods and high water, lined waterways with concrete, built cattle guards, installed concrete pipe siphons to replace old metal and wooden flumes, and constructed and improved canal operating roads to accept automobiles in place of horse-drawn vehicles. Other efforts included eradicating weeds and rodents, and assisting in fighting forest fires.

### **Camps BR-23 and BR-71, Camp History/Activities (continued)**

Major features constructed by the enrollees included a new 60-foot-long dam and spillway at the Montrose and Delta headgate; a 700-foot-long reinforced concrete flume just below the outlet of the C.P. Siphon on High Mesa; the Selig Canal Chute, a 367-foot long metal and concrete structure; and the 70-foot-long concrete Allerton Draw culvert on the "B" Lateral. In 1938, enrollees riprapped the face of Fruitgrowers Dam. In 1940, the CCC conducted substantial improvements to the East Canal Diversion Dam located on the Uncompahgre River. Work included replacing the river weir and main floodgates, reconstructing the headworks, and reflooring and rebuilding the sidewalls. CCC enrollees also contributed to visitor enhancements at the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Monument, where they built foot trails. A number of the young men even volunteered to help build a community swimming pool in Montrose in their spare time.

A tent side camp was established on June 15, 1936, in the Black Canyon of the Gunnison at the East Portal to the Gunnison Tunnel. The camp sat on tailings left from the excavation of the tunnel. One enrollee, Malcolm Taylor, described conditions as follows:

"We slept in tents and our mess shack was four walls with a tin roof, lighted with kerosene lamps and one Coleman lantern. We were at water level and the sun would shine only once a day. We had a 50-gal. bag on a tripod that I had to fill each day from the river. We also had 2 55-gal. steel barrels connected together with a shower head for bathing. Painted black to soak up the heat from the sun, the barrels did not get very warm so it was cold showers all around."

Despite the rather primitive conditions, Taylor loved the adventure and described it as the best summer he ever spent ("The Way I Remember It").

For the next 6 months at the side camp, a crew averaging 18 enrollees labored on widening and reconstructing the old, nearly impassable 12-mile road leading from the top of the canyon down to the East Portal. Using jack hammers, a compressor, and a bulldozer, as well as dynamite, the enrollees transformed the dangerous road into one fit for trucks. The strenuous work continued in the summers of 1937 and 1938, and the results were praised as follows: "The success of this undertaking indicates the possibility of performing almost any type of construction through CCC" ("A Report Covering Activities of CCC Camps Assigned to Reclamation Projects in Fourteen Western States"). Another side camp was established in 1939 at Taylor Park, 100 miles from the main camp, to complete the unfinished work in the stilling basin at Taylor Park Dam and to build a parapet and curb wall along the top of that dam.

When not working, the enrollees could participate in a variety of sports or enjoy different entertainment offerings. The National Guard gave the youths free use of the armory in Montrose, where dances, boxing, and basketball games were held.

On July 8, 1941, Camp BR-23 was converted to a veterans camp. The former soldiers who occupied the camp ranged mostly in age from 40 to 60. With the transfer of Company No. 3843 from Camp BR-71 to *Camp BR-94* at Mancos on October 24, 1941, only Camp BR-23 remained in operation to continue improvements to the Uncompahgre Project. The veterans carried on until May 1942, when Camp BR-23 was also terminated.

**Camps BR-23 and BR-71, Camp History/Activities (continued)**

CCC reports praised the impressive work of both camps, in part due to the good relationship that existed between camp personnel and the Uncompahgre Valley Water Users Association. The young men left with newly acquired skills as truck drivers; caterpillar, bulldozer, and other heavy equipment operators; and as compressor and jack hammer operators. Some also gained office experience and learned to type. The varied educational program offered grade school, high school, vocational, and handicraft courses.

**CAMP DESCRIPTION (number/type of buildings)**

Camp BR-23 was located on private land and was connected to the city of Montrose water supply and sewer system. Buildings at the 200-man camp consisted of five wooden barracks with plasterboard interior walls; a large mess hall and kitchen; recreation hall and headquarters building, which included offices for both the Army and technical service, and a supply room; officers' quarters; technical men's quarters; infirmary; and bathhouse. In addition, there was a stone oil house and 10-stall corrugated metal storage garage.

Buildings at Camp BR-71 were of rigid stationary construction.

**DISPOSITION/CURRENT STATUS**

On August 17, 1942, Camps BR-23 and BR-71 were transferred to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Sometime prior to March 1944, both camps were transferred to Reclamation and leased by Reclamation to the Uncompahgre Valley Water Users' Association.

**SOURCES**

Civilian Conservation Corps, Office of the Director, "A Report Covering the Activities of CCC Camps Assigned to Reclamation Projects in Fourteen Western States," July 1937, Box 180, Entry 7, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

"History of the Civilian Conservation Corps in Colorado, Littleton District - Grand Junction District," compiled by L.A. Gleyre and C.N. Alleger, Denver, Colorado, Press of the Western Newspaper Union, Summer 1936.

Memo from Regional Director, C. B. Elliott, to Chief Engineer, January 30, 1936, Box 90, Entry 21, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

National Register of Historic Places nomination form for the Historic Canals (South, East, and Montrose and Delta Canals) on the Bureau of Reclamation's Uncompahgre Project, prepared by Peggy Barnett, Bureau of Reclamation, January 1984. Property was not listed due to objections by private property owners. On January 31, 1986, the property was determined eligible by the Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places.

Reclamation, *Annual Project Histories, Uncompahgre Project*, 1935 through 1941, Boxes 207 and 208, Accession # 8NN-115-90-011, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

Reclamation, *Annual Project Histories, Uncompahgre Project*, 1934 through 1936, Box 583, Entry 10, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.



**Camps BR-23 and BR-71, Sources (continued)**

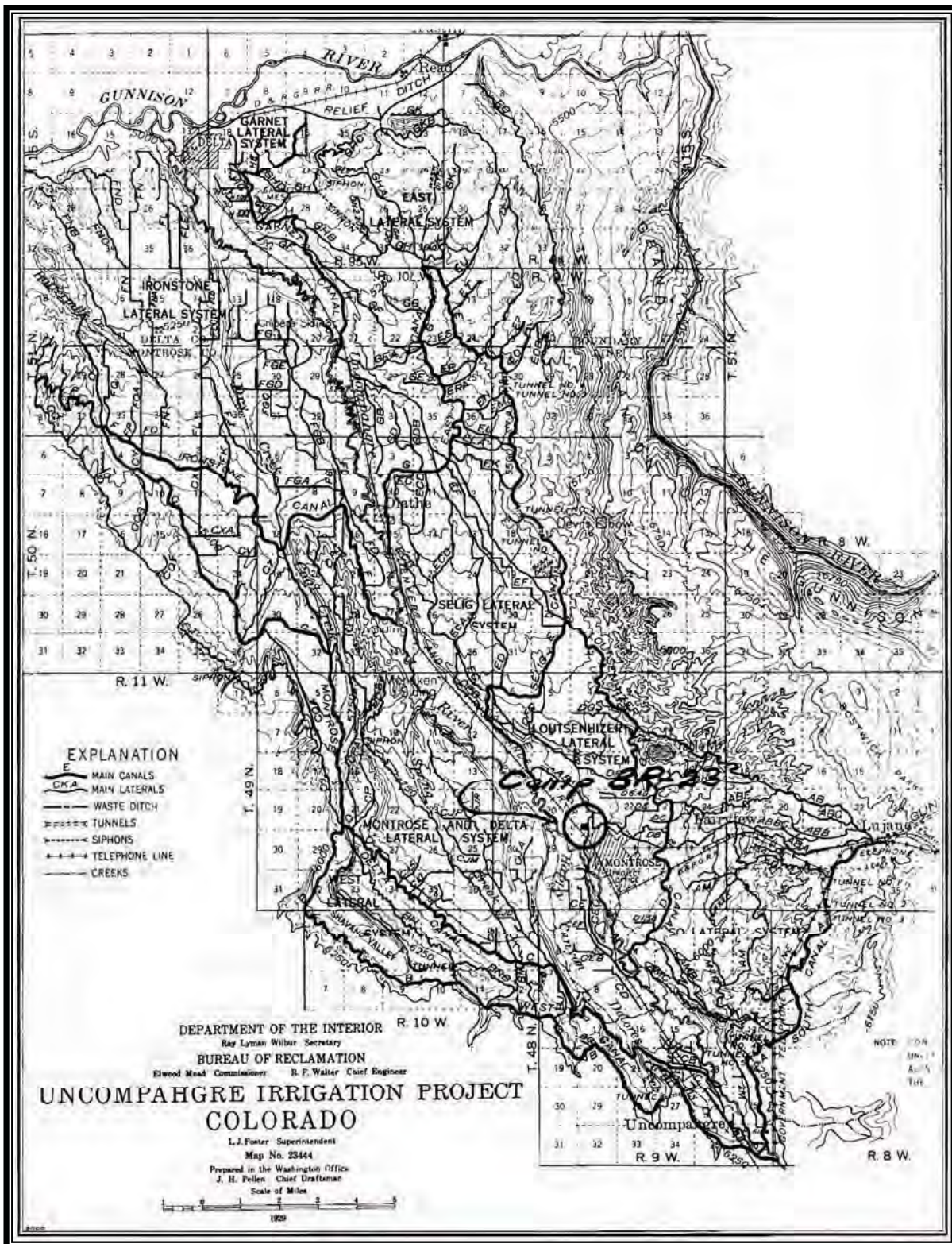
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Reclamation, Work Progress Reports, Box 13, Entry 26, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

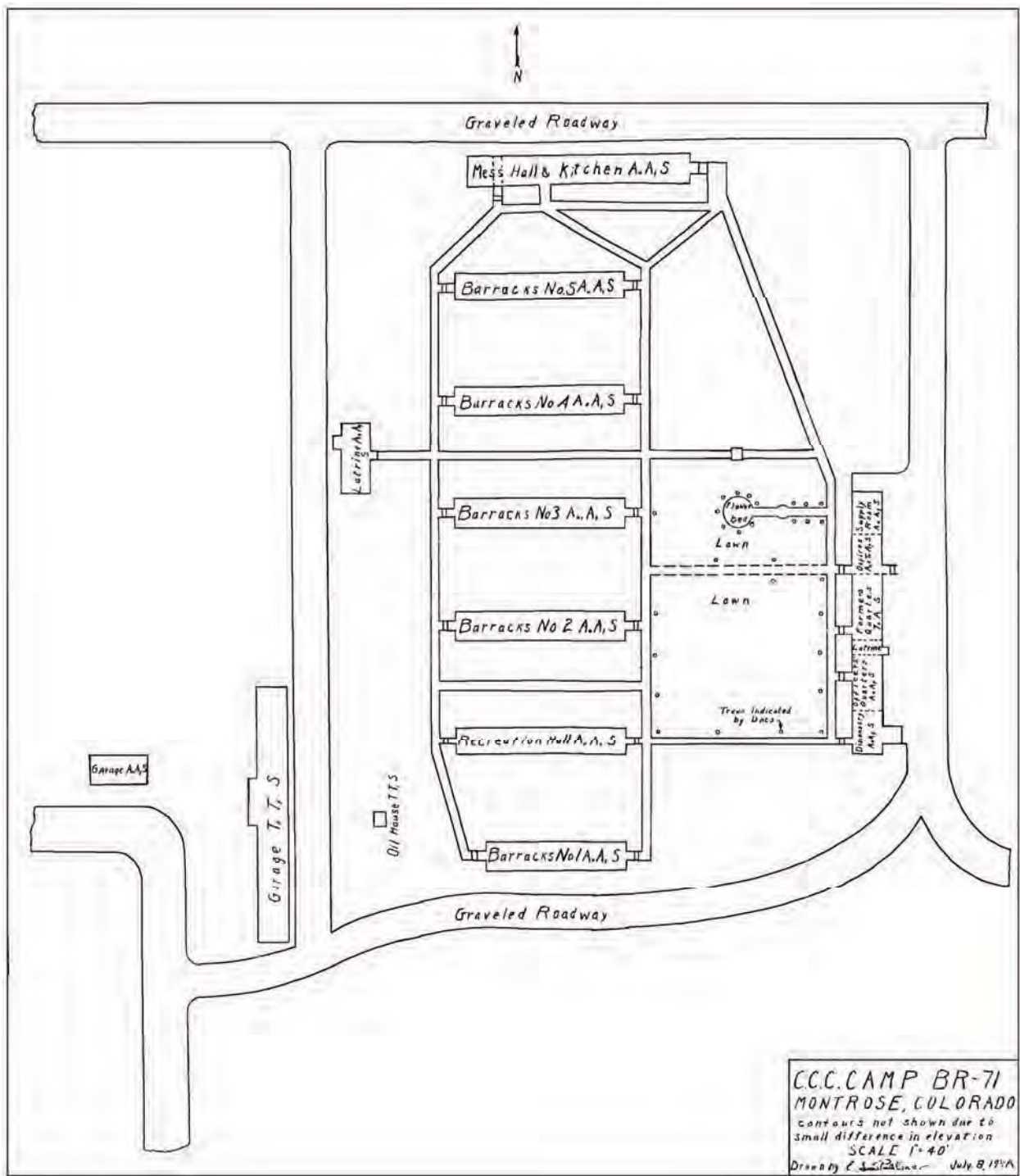
Robert Parham, "The Civilian Conservation Corps in Colorado, 1933-1942," Master's Thesis, University of Colorado, 1981.

"The Way I Remember It," clipping given to author by Malcolm Taylor, no source or date.

**Recorded by: Christine Pfaff, Bureau of Reclamation, Denver, 2009**



Camp BR-23: Uncompahgre Project, map showing camp location (Box 21, Entry 21, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-71: Uncompahgre Project, site plan of camp, 1938 (Box 154, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).





Camp BR-23: Uncompahgre Project, view of camp looking north taken from U.S. Highway No. 50, 1935 (Box 207, Accession No. 8NN-115-90-011, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-23: Uncompahgre Project, view of camp entrance constructed by enrollees, 1936 (Box 207, Accession No. 8NN-115-90-011, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



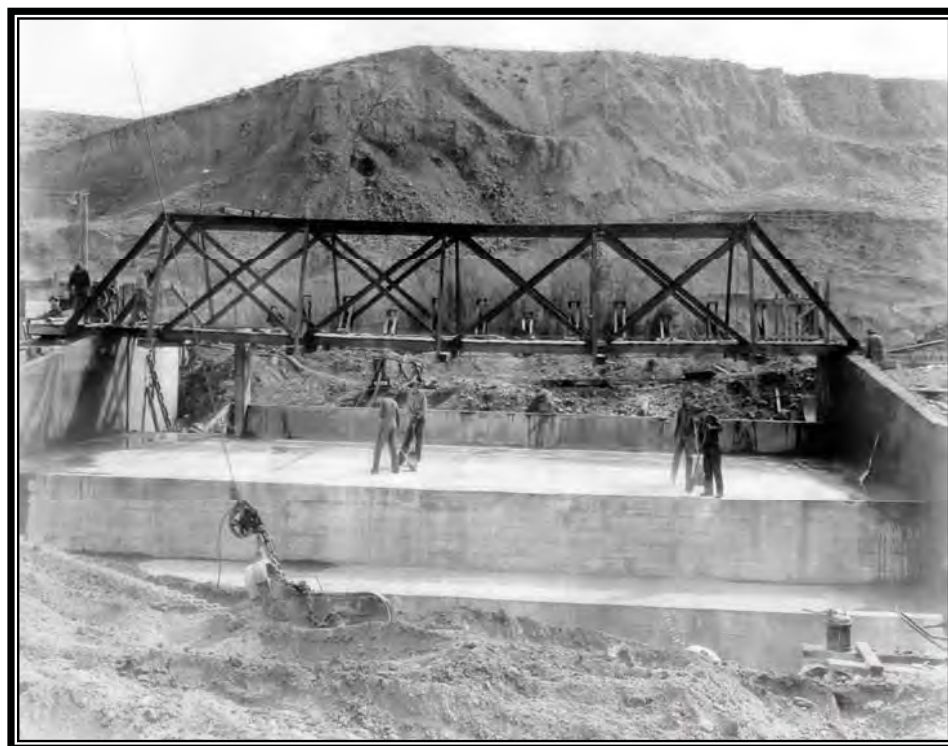
Camp BR-23: Uncompahgre Project, truck drivers and their trucks in background after their Saturday bath, November 16, 1935 (Box 19, Accession No. 8NS-115-95-112, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-23: Uncompahgre Project, enrollees working on Gunnison Tunnel truck trail, 1936 (Box 207, Accession No. 8NN-115-90-011, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-23 and BR-71: Uncompahgre Project, backfilling around completed concrete pipe siphon at C.Q.A.-0.86, February 9, 1940 (Box 1, Entry 31, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-23 and BR-71: Uncompahgre Project, view of completed job at East Canal sump and headworks, March 1940 (Box 1, Entry 31, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).





Camp BR-23 and BR-71: Uncompahgre Project, completed chute at FL-9.16 looking downstream, March 4, 1941 (Box 1, Entry 31, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-23 and BR-71: Uncompahgre Project, setting forms for the F.L.-3.25 concrete check, March 18, 1941 (Box 1, Entry 31, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-23 and BR-71: Uncompahgre Project, placing rock and mortar in check in Spring Creek, April 21, 1941 (Box 1, Entry 31, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-23 and BR-71: Uncompahgre Project, view of completed headgate at F.C. 0.00, April 8, 1941 (Box 1, Entry 31, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).

## BUREAU OF RECLAMATION CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS STUDY

<b>Camp Number</b>	<b>BR-24</b>	<b>Camp Name</b>	Caldwell
<b>State</b>	Idaho	<b>County</b>	Canyon
<b>Location</b>	Deer Flat Reservoir, 6 miles southwest of Caldwell		
<b>Reclamation Project</b>	Boise	<b>Army Corps Area</b>	9
<b>Date Established</b>	September 1935	<b>Date Terminated</b>	June 1942

### **CAMP HISTORY/ACTIVITIES**

Camp Caldwell, BR-24, was one of four CCC camps established on the expansive Boise Project, which provides a full irrigation water supply to about 224,000 acres in southwestern Idaho and a small area of eastern Oregon. The three other CCC camps on the project consisted of *Camps BR-25, BR-26, and BR-73*.

The primary assignment of Camp BR-24 was to rehabilitate the earthfill embankments that form Lake Lowell, originally known as Deer Flat Reservoir. Part of the original Boise Project plan, authorized in March 1905, the off-stream reservoir was constructed between 1906 and 1909. Located near Nampa, Idaho, it is an important storage and regulating unit of the Boise Project. Three embankments—the Upper, Middle (Forest Dam), and Lower—created the reservoir. In addition, the Roadway Dike at the eastern end of the reservoir was built to protect area farms from possible flooding.

Camp BR-24 was located at the northwest end of the Lower Embankment, which is 46 feet high and 7,270 feet long. High winds, resulting in severe wave action, had caused a great deal of erosion near the high water line of both the Lower and Upper Embankments, seriously damaging the features. Enrollees took on the job of protecting the upstream faces near the crest with heavy riprap and a parapet wall. The young men started at the Lower Embankment in September 1935. The work involved reshaping the upstream face of the embankment to the proper slope with gravel fill and then covering the slope with heavy rock riprap. The riprap was protected at the bottom of the slope by a toe wall. To accomplish this, the enrollees dug a 3-foot-deep trench at the foot of the embankment and filled it with rock.

Initially, the intent was to rely on hand labor to the extent possible, but it soon became apparent that it was much too inefficient. When a quarry was opened in lava outcrop, about 2.5 miles south of the Lower Embankment, enrollees used air compressors, drills, and explosives to break up the rock. It was then hauled to the embankment on trucks. For several months, the young men loaded the rocks by hand, but this proved too slow, so hoists were used instead. Improvised portable derricks then lifted the heavier rocks into place at the embankment. A considerable amount of gravel had to be hauled to reshape the slope prior to placing the rock. At first, gravel was loaded by hand, but switching to the use of a dragline greatly expedited the task. Upon completion of the Lower Embankment in 1938, the enrollees continued with restoration of the Upper Embankment.

The high quality of the enrollees' endeavors on the Deer Flat Reservoir embankments earned them praise:

The work has been exceptionally well done. The CCC boys have worked hard and with enthusiasm and are proud of the permanent structure that has grown under their hands. The boys quickly developed skill and aptitude at the job. Especially in the parapet, the finished wall is attractive in appearance and gives an impression of permanence and stability. The enrollees have learned something of the way to operate drills, compressors, hoists, and tractors, to handle big rock with all sorts of mechanical devices and by sheer strength. . . It is, without doubt, one of the most popular local CCC projects and the

### **Camp BR-24, Camp History/Activities (continued)**

finished work will stand as an enduring monument to the CCC boys and the assistance they have rendered to the people of the Boise Valley in the conservation of their greatest asset-irrigation water (*The Reclamation Era* 1938).

Aside from the work at Deer Flat Reservoir, BR-24 enrollees engaged in rehabilitating the Boise Project's irrigation system. Activities included cleaning, clearing, and riprapping canals; excavating canals and drains; building canal roadways; and constructing water control features. Crews replaced old wooden pipe with modern concrete tile pipe and old flumes with concrete and tile siphons. Initially, the Federal Government supplied the tile from its plant in Dunaway, Oregon. In the summer of 1939, the camp began operating its own tile factory, located on the west end of the Lower Embankment, about 1 mile from camp. Twenty-five young men were employed making 24-inch concrete tile for siphons to replace the wooden flumes on the project. Other crews that summer constructed a riprap wall 1,200 feet long on the drop on the feeder canal that delivered water into Lake Lowell south of Nampa; straightened and riprapped the 5-1/2-mile-long Bernard Wasteway; and rehabilitated laterals in the Gem Irrigation District.

Other CCC efforts included weed eradication, rodent control, and tree planting in the camp garden area. Enrollees maintained a vegetable garden, as well as a nursery. Locust and walnut trees were raised and given to new settlers to plant on their farms.

A newsletter entitled "The Damsite Echo" was published monthly at Camp BR-24. Articles described various aspects of camp life, including sports events, recreational activities, safety concerns, and news of enrollees.

In 1941, the last full year of the camp's operation, work was divided between the Boise Project and the Gem Irrigation District of the Owyhee Project. At the latter, enrollees rehabilitated the water delivery system, built cattle guards, and did roadwork. On the Boise Project, enrollees laid concrete pipe for the Dumpke Siphon and produced pipe for reconstructing turnouts and several other siphons. The youths also constructed a telephone line connecting the Notus office with Black Canyon Dam.

Initially, local residents reacted negatively to the camp, but attitudes changed completely over time due to the work accomplished by enrollees. In the fiscal year 1939 CCC annual report for the Boise Project, these achievements were noted as follows: "Enrollees are to be complimented on the amount of work done and the time spent doing it. They are very willing workers and easily adapt themselves to any kind of work. They take pride in their work and try to get a first-class job done as soon as possible."

While the enrollees received compliments for their efforts, the technical staff, in particular the camp superintendent, did not. Camp inspection reports repeatedly noted the unsatisfactory morale and attitude of the technical personnel. They lacked teamwork, enthusiasm, interest, and cooperation. Much of this was attributed to the camp superintendent's poor leadership and organization skills. Camp records were inaccurate, improperly filed, or misplaced. Some enrollees even went unaccounted for. In an April 1938 report, inspector Homer Graham wrote: "It is rather painful to write up this report on this camp. Supt. John S. Kerwin is well over 70 years old, I believe; he has wide construction experience, he is a fine old man, but that doesn't solve the problem. With 150 to 175 enrollees and the increasing regulations and demands, a superintendent has a very large and strenuous job to handle" ("Report of Visit to Camp BR-24"). Matters continued to deteriorate, and, finally, in late 1941, Superintendent Leek from Camp BR-24 replaced Superintendent Kerwin.. The camp closed on June 1, 1942.

## Camp BR-24 (continued)

### CAMP DESCRIPTION (number/type of buildings)

The camp was located on Reclamation land that had been turned over to the water users for operation and maintenance. Buildings constructed were of the rigid type and included eight barracks (frame, 20 feet by 64 feet), a mess hall and kitchen (frame, 20 feet by 119 feet by 35 feet ), army headquarters (frame, 20 feet by 127 feet), officers' quarters (frame, 20 feet by 42 feet), infirmary (frame, 20 feet by 43 feet), technical quarters (frame, 20 feet by 80 feet), laundry and bath house (frame, 20 feet by 75 feet), education building (frame, 20 feet by 80 feet), cooler house (frame, 12 feet by 17 feet), and various garages, shops, storehouses, and other utility buildings.

### DISPOSITION/CURRENT STATUS

On December 1, 1942, the CCC turned over the entire camp to the Bureau of Reclamation. Early in 1943, Reclamation made plans to advertise the sale of some of the buildings. Locals had expressed an interest in buying some of them for use as farm labor housing at other locations. Buildings to be sold included the eight barracks, the mess hall, and the cooler house. The sale did not occur due to interest shown in the camp, first by the Farm Security Administration, then by the War Department during the spring, summer, and fall of 1943. In a March 1944 memo on former CCC camps, the status of BR-24 is noted as "bids received from interested purchasers and project given permission to dispose of the camp by sale."

### SOURCES

"CCC Rebuilds Deer Flat Reservoir Embankments," *The Reclamation Era* 28 (November 1938), 230-231.

Civilian Conservation Corps, Office of the Director, "A Report Covering the Activities of CCC Camps Assigned to Reclamation Projects in Fourteen Western States," July 1937, Box 180, Entry 7, RG 115, National Archives, Denver..

"Deer Flat CCC Camp is Now Operating New Tile Plant," *Caldwell News-Tribune*, August 22, 1939.

"Deer Flat Enrollees Are Occupied During Winter Months," *Caldwell News-Tribune*, December 27, 1938.

Reclamation, General Records of CCC Activities, Boxes 13, 35, 36, 47, 48, 49, and 85, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

Reclamation, "Report of Visit to Camp BR-24," by Homer Graham, April 1938, Box 85, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

**Recorded by: Christine Pfaff, Bureau of Reclamation, Denver, 2009**





Camp BR-24: Boise Project, enrollees constructing toe wall and preparing to place rocks on slope of Lower Deer Flat Embankment, December 17, 1935 (Box 38, Entry 10, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-24: Boise Project, rock paving and parapet on Lower Deer Flat Embankment placed by CCC enrollees, 1937 (Box 39, Entry 10, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).





Camp BR-24: Boise Project, enrollees working in tree nursery at Camp BR-24, 1939 (Box 39, Entry 10, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-24; Boise Project, concrete pipe manufacturing plant built and operated by Camp BR-24, 1939 (Box 39, Entry 10, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-24: Boise Project, enrollees placing concrete pipe siphon on lateral system, 1939, (Box 39, Entry 10, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-24: Boise Project, enrollees placing a lateral drop, February 8, 1940 (Box 1, Entry 31, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-24: Boise Project, enrollees placing gravel and rock riprap around inlet of overflow pipe in Gem Irrigation District drain, April 3, 1940 (Box 1, Entry 31, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-24: Boise Project, crew placing 24-inch concrete pipe, March 14, 1941 (Box 1, Entry 31, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-24: Boise Project, sheet metal and arch welding class, 1941 (Box 40, Entry 10, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).





Camp BR-24: Boise Project, auto mechanics class, November 14, 1941 (Box 1, Entry 31, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).

## BUREAU OF RECLAMATION CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS STUDY

<b>Camp Number</b>	BR-25	<b>Camp Name</b>	Arrowrock
<b>State</b>	Idaho	<b>County</b>	Boise
<b>Location</b>	T. 3 N., R. 4 E., sec. 15, SE1/4		
<b>Reclamation Project</b>	Boise	<b>Army Corps Area</b>	9
<b>Date Established</b>	October 1935	<b>Date Terminated</b>	September 30, 1936
<b>CAMP HISTORY/ACTIVITIES</b>			
<p>Camp Arrowrock, BR-25, was one of four CCC camps allocated to the Boise Project. The other three were camps <i>BR-24</i>, <i>BR-26</i>, and <i>BR-73</i>. Construction of BR-25 began September 3, 1935, on private land belonging to Roy Call.</p> <p>Camp BR-25 enrollees primarily conducted improvements at Arrowrock Dam, a key feature of the Boise Project, located on the Boise River about 20 miles north of Boise. When completed in 1915, the structure ranked as the tallest concrete dam in the world. CCC work at or near the dam included rebuilding the Government weather station, installing fences at the U.S. Forest Service Experimental Station, reconstructing about 5 miles of project telephone lines due to State highway construction, repairing the Boise River road, razing an old building at Arrowrock Dam in preparation for building new residences, and constructing rock retaining walls along the Boise River's edge and a rock guardrail.</p> <p>Camp BR-25 was suspended at the end of the 7th period (September 30, 1936). Following the camp's closure, a side camp from <i>Camp BR-26</i> was maintained there to finish up work at Arrowrock Dam and the Boise River Diversion Dam.</p> <p>In April 1937, Reclamation Commissioner John Page granted permission to move the buildings from Camp BR-25 to a new site.</p>			
<b>CAMP DESCRIPTION (number/type of buildings)</b>			
No information was found.			
<b>DISPOSITION/CURRENT STATUS</b>			
In 1937, the buildings at Camp BR-25 were relocated to establish a new camp on the Boise Project, <i>BR-73</i> . Enrollees at the <i>Camp BR-26</i> side camp accomplished the move.			
<b>SOURCES</b>			
<p>Reclamation, General Records of CCC Activities, Boxes 47, 48, and 49, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.</p> <p>Reclamation, Records of the Supervising Engineer in Charge of Emergency Conservation Work, Box 23, Entry 21, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.</p> <p><b>Recorded by: Christine Pfaff, Bureau of Reclamation, Denver, 2009</b></p>			

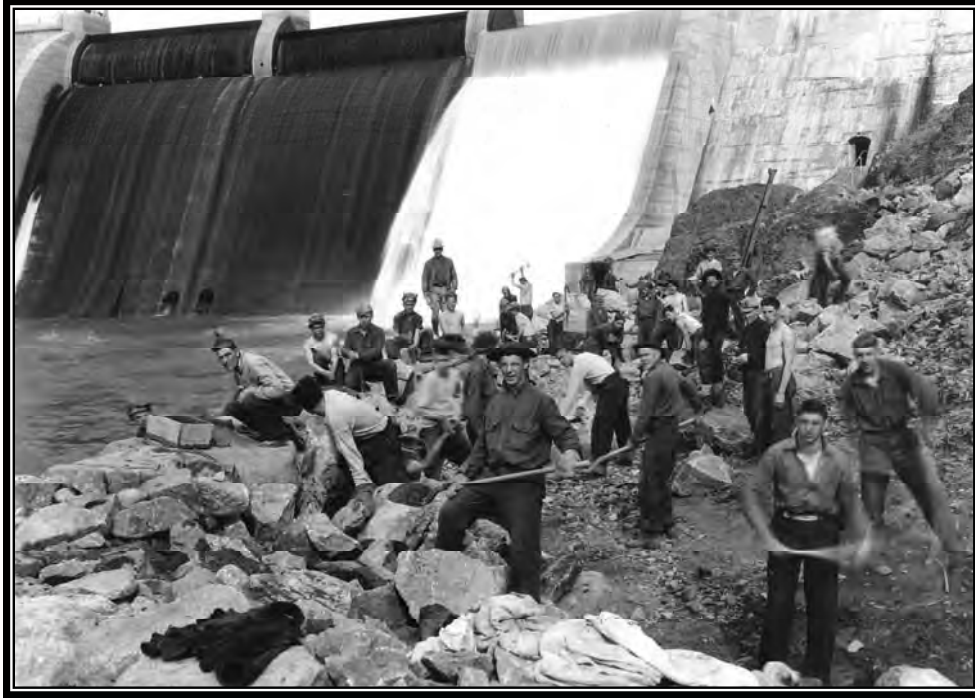


Camp BR-25: Boise Project, earth moving at Arrowrock Dam site, date unknown (courtesy of Idaho State Historical Society, MS 683, Box 5, Folder 34, Photo No. 11).

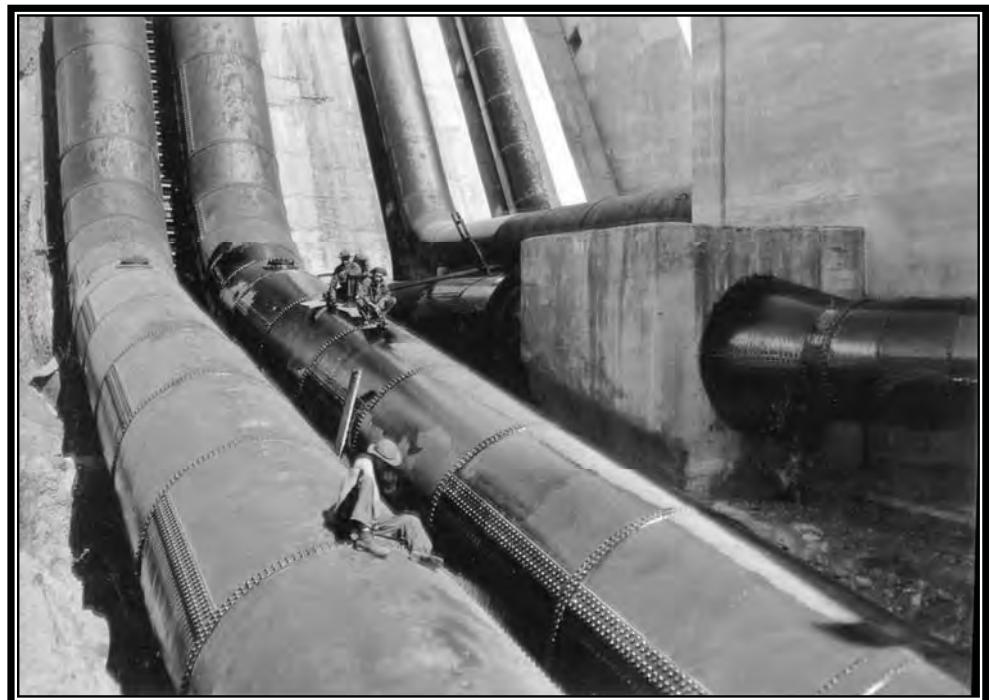


## BUREAU OF RECLAMATION CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS STUDY

<b>Camp Number</b>	<b>BR-26</b>	<b>Camp Name</b>	Payette
<b>State</b>	Idaho	<b>County</b>	Gem
<b>Location</b>	North shore of Black Canyon Reservoir, T. 7 N., R. 1, sec.19, NW1/4		
<b>Reclamation Project</b>	Boise	<b>Army Corps Area</b>	9
<b>Date Established</b>	October 1935	<b>Date Terminated</b>	September 30, 1937
<b>CAMP HISTORY/ACTIVITIES</b>			
<p>Camp Payette, BR-26, was one of four CCC camps associated with the Boise Project. The other three were camps <i>BR-24</i>, <i>BR-25</i>, and <i>BR-73</i>. Established in October 1935, Camp BR-26 was located on the north shore of Black Canyon Reservoir, about 2 miles above Black Canyon Diversion Dam. Work of the camp enrollees focused on improvements to the concrete gravity dam and surrounding features. Achievements included construction of a new vehicular bridge across the dam and new guardrails at the Black Canyon Powerplant, lining of the Black Canyon Canal, riprapping of the bridge abutments below Black Canyon Dam, and completion of a rock wall along the shoreline of the river below the dam. In addition, enrollees performed general cleanup, landscaping, lawn seeding, and repairs to buildings at Black Canyon Diversion Dam. They also conducted a gopher eradication program.</p> <p>In 1937, a spike camp from Camp BR-26 was set up at abandoned <i>Camp BR-25</i> to finish work at Arrowrock Dam and the Boise River Diversion Dam. The spike camp enrollees also dismantled and helped move the portable buildings at <i>BR-25</i> to Kuna, the site of <i>Camp BR-73</i>. Camp BR-26 was closed on September 30, 1937, and enrollees moved to <i>BR-73</i>.</p>			
<b>CAMP DESCRIPTION (number/type of buildings)</b>			
<p>Buildings at Camp BR-26 consisted of four barracks, a mess hall and kitchen, an officers' quarters building, a technical service building, an infirmary, office building, supply building, bathhouse, latrine building, recreation building, gasoline house, pump house, and root cellar. All buildings, except the gasoline house and root cellar, were equipped with screen doors and had electricity. The camp was built on land belonging to the U.S. Government.</p>			
<b>DISPOSITION/CURRENT STATUS</b>			
<p>In January 1938, following the closure of the camp, Reclamation agreed to the term transfer of Camp BR-26 to the Soil Conservation Service. Some refitting and repairs were conducted; and in February 1938, the camp was reoccupied and designated Camp SCS-9. Disposition, thereafter, is unknown.</p>			
<b>SOURCES</b>			
<p>Reclamation, General Records of CCC Activities, Boxes 11, 48, and 49, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.</p> <p><b>Recorded by: Christine Pfaff, Bureau of Reclamation, Denver, 2009</b></p>			



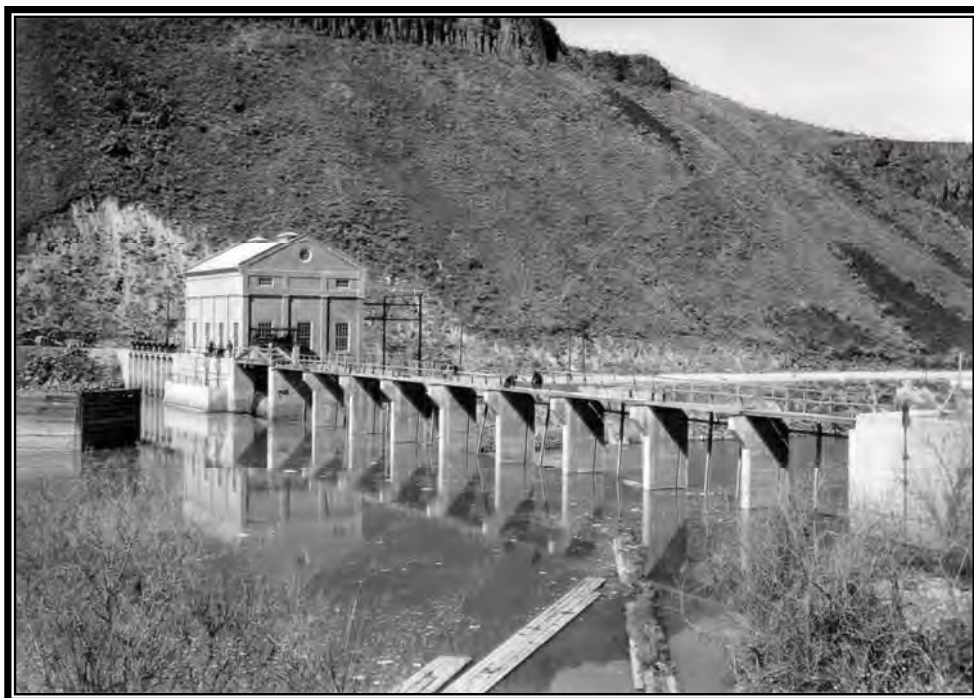
Camp BR-26: Boise Project, enrollees constructing retaining wall at Black Canyon Dam, 1936 (Box 39, Entry 10, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-26: Boise Project, CCC enrollees cleaning and painting steel penstocks at Black Canyon Dam, 1937 (Box 39, Entry 10, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-26: Boise Project, upstream view of Boise River Diversion Dam before improvement work, 1937 (Box 39, Entry 10, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).



Camp BR-26: Boise Project, Boise River Diversion Dam with new flashboard crest, concrete piers, and roadway constructed by CCC enrollees, 1937 (Box 39, Entry 10, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).

## BUREAU OF RECLAMATION CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS STUDY

<b>Camp Number</b>	<b>BR-27</b>	<b>Camp Name</b>	Minidoka/Rupert
<b>State</b>	Idaho	<b>County</b>	Minidoka
<b>Location</b>	Minidoka Dam		
<b>Reclamation Project</b>	Minidoka	<b>Army Corps Area</b>	9
<b>Date Established</b>	October 1935	<b>Date Terminated</b>	June 30, 1941
<b>CAMP HISTORY/ACTIVITIES</b>			
<p>In early 1935, the CCC agreed to furnish enrollees to Reclamation's Minidoka Project, selecting Walcott Park as the site for both a camp and conservation project. Walcott Park is located along the shore of Walcott Lake, which was formed behind Minidoka Dam in 1906. The park was not systematically developed for public recreational purposes until the 1930s, when the CCC improved and expanded the grounds. From 1935 to 1942, the CCC had a profound effect on the appearance of the park; other than a few random improvements, it had remained relatively unchanged since the 1910s.</p> <p>In April 1935, Idaho Senator D. Worth Clark released the news that Camp Minidoka, BR-27, was one of 27 new CCC camps to be opened in the State. Plans were also announced for a second camp on the Minidoka Project, to be located near the town of Paul. Last minute budget reductions, however, postponed work on the second facility, and the Paul camp did not open until 1938, when it was designated <i>Camp BR-56</i>. Camp BR-27 was established July 5, 1935, and completed by the end of September 1935, although a few minor structures were added later in the year.</p> <p>Camp BR-27 was first occupied late in October 1935, when Company No. 587 arrived under the command of Captain James Milton. With a strength of approximately 200 men, the company was primarily composed of enrollees from the Fifth Corps Area, which included Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky, and West Virginia. These enrollees did not stay at the camp for long, however, for the entire company was transferred at the beginning of April 1936. Two days following the departure of Company No. 587, Company No. 3234 arrived from New Jersey. Thereafter, about once a year, Camp BR-27 received a new contingent of men and a new commanding officer. The camp continued to draw enrollees from the Fifth Corps Area, as well as the Second Corps Area, which included New York and New Jersey. A small number of local men, usually no more than 10 at a time, also served at Camp BR-27 during each enrollment period.</p> <p>Reclamation's Minidoka Project manager drew up the CCC work plan for Camp BR-27 as part of his general duties, and a camp superintendent and foremen, assigned by the CCC, supervised the men at work. At Camp BR-27, Louis Petzoldt served as camp superintendent from 1936 until the camp closed in 1941, ensuring a continuity of authority despite the routine turnover of army camp commanders.</p> <p>E. B. Darlington, the Minidoka Project manager, submitted his first work program for Camp BR-27 in March 1935, outlining 15 projects ranging from the "improvement of the sewer system for public recreational grounds at Minidoka Dam" to "hauling rock and riprapping lateral banks in Burley Irrigation District."</p> <p>Riprapping and other canal improvements eventually proved to be the CCC's main task on the Minidoka Project. Rock was quarried and gathered in the desert, hauled to the canals and laterals, and hand placed on the banks to prevent leakages, washing, and erosion. Lining canals with clay and gravel; constructing service roads on the canal banks; excavating rock and earth from the South Side Canal to</p>			

### **Camp BR-27, Camp History/Activities (continued)**

increase its carrying capacity; raising and widening the banks of the B Canal, North Side; replacing old deteriorated water control structures; constructing a concrete pumphouse foundation on the D-12 Drain, North Side; and cleaning the banks of the B and C Canals were other tasks accomplished on the irrigation system. Building a garage foundation, concrete basement, and stone wall at the residential/pumphouse area on the Second Lift Canal also occupied the time and energy of CCC men.

Reclamation placed improvements to Walcott Park as a high priority. Initial work was completed according to a plan developed by Dana Templin, who succeeded Darlington as Minidoka Project manager in 1936. The work was confined to the "Old Park" area and consisted of blasting rocky outcrops, filling in low spots, removing old trees and stumps, and building stone walls and terraces. At the urging of the National Park Service (NPS), Reclamation eventually employed professional landscape architects to develop park plans. In November 1937, Reclamation Commissioner John Page wrote to Dana Templin to let him know that he had someone in mind for designing Walcott Park. The man Page had in mind was Richard Redell, a NPS landscape architect and city planner, who at the time was producing a plan for Guernsey Lake Park.

Redell arrived at Camp BR-27 sometime in late January or early February 1938. After a few weeks onsite, he returned to Lake Guernsey, where he produced a preliminary design for Walcott Park dated February 21, 1938. In his plan, Redell proposed to expand the park by landscaping the peninsula to the east, as well as shore areas north and south of the peninsula. Although most of the new land was to serve as picnic grounds, a small cove by the powerhouse transformer yard was to become a swimming area, with a beach, swimming float, and bathhouse. In the Old Park area, Redell planned to consolidate the grounds by removing the last vestiges of the Minidoka Road and by converting the former garden and orchard, on the west edge of the park, into a picnic area. Although Redell's plan served as the basis for Walcott Park's eventual development, Redell did not supervise the work.

In the fall of 1938, a new architect, Carl I. Shaw, arrived at Camp Minidoka. Shaw introduced several important changes to Redell's master plan. These included additional parking and overlook areas on the new service road running north along the lakeshore, as well as a stone entrance gate on the Acacia Road along the riverbank. Shaw also decided not to build several small fountains that Redell had proposed, and he abandoned plans for a bathhouse. Perhaps most strikingly, Shaw proposed an extensive filling program to create new, low-lying land along the lakeshore to serve as picnic grounds. Shaw also carried out an extensive tree-planting program with the assistance of CCC enrollees. They planted about 1,500 trees of a variety of species and established a nursery at the park to aid the growth of seedling trees. Enrollees collected volunteer seedlings from in and around the park and transplanted them to the two nursery plots. Two experimental plots of strawberry clover were also planted.

In December 1939, S. R. Marean, the new Minidoka Project manager, learned that CCC cutbacks might require closing one of the camps on the Minidoka Project. With that in mind, the CCC undertook only a few minor projects in the park in 1940. These included the construction of a lava rock latrine and the completion of a new access road that crossed the North Side Canal over a wooden bridge built by the enrollees. The CCC also started work on a new irrigation system for the park. News of the potential camp closure sparked protest letters to Washington from the Rupert Chamber of Commerce and Rupert Rotary Club. Fortunately, both Minidoka camps survived the proposed cuts.

Improvements made by the CCC transformed the appearance of Walcott Park. In addition to those items mentioned above, enrollees planted 3 acres of grass; constructed stone walls and terrace riprap;

### **Camp BR-27, Camp History/Activities (continued)**

built seven septic tanks, five fireplaces, six picnic tables, one tennis court, one swimming pool, and a boathouse; and installed a sewage system. Another significant endeavor was weed eradication along the shores of Lake Walcott. Enrollees treated a total of 92 acres, primarily by applying chlorates supplied by benefitting agencies. A large-scale rodent eradication program consumed 6,420 enrollee man-days. Over an area of 187,900 acres, enrollees used poison, traps, and clubs to kill gophers, kangaroo rats, rabbits, magpies, coyotes, and squirrels all considered to be destructive.

Another area that received the benefit of CCC labor was the Lake Walcott Wildlife Refuge. The U.S. Biological Survey (renamed the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 1940) had never had sufficient funding to actively manage the facility, and it was very poorly tended. In 1936, the agency's regional agent stationed at Boise, T. B. Murray, suggested using CCC and Works Progress Administration labor to improve the refuge. Murray proposed using enrollee labor to fence parts of the refuge to reduce poaching and trespassing, and to plant trees, shrubs, and grasses for feed and cover areas. He also proposed building several small earthen dams on lake inlets to establish waterfowl feeding pools.

Dana Templin agreed to allot some of his CCC labor to the wildlife preserve work program. CCC enrollees set to work on the refuge in September 1936. By the time they were done, 12,339 man-days had been expended there. Four diversion dams were constructed, nearly 24 miles of fence were erected to enclose the refuge, and 67 miles of minor road were built to facilitate service. Nesting grounds were developed, and feed and ground cover were planted. Amidst internal squabbling within the U.S. Biological Survey over the construction of a headquarters complex at the refuge, the CCC constructed a stone service building with space for an office at one end and for housing trucks and boats at the other. The CCC provided the labor; the Biological Survey supplied the materials. A proposed residence and boathouse were never built.

When Camp BR-27 closed in early July 1941, enrollees were transferred to Farson, Wyoming, to *Camp BR-101*. Marean transferred the architect, Carl Shaw, to the Paul CCC camp near Rupert (*Camp BR-56*) to continue improvements at Walcott Park. Through the summer, Shaw supervised enrollees from *BR-56* as they completed installation of the irrigation system at the park. In addition to laying concrete pipe made onsite, the enrollees constructed a stone-lined canal just above the main pump, probably to help regulate the flow of irrigation water. When the Paul camp closed in May 1942, CCC improvements came to an end.

(Most of the above information is excerpted from Fraserdesign, HABS No. ID-103, Walcott Park. For a more detailed account of the development of Walcott Park and CCC activities there, see the report)

### **CAMP DESCRIPTION (number/type of buildings)**

Camp BR-27 was located immediately adjacent to Walcott Park. The camp contained about 18 wood-frame buildings, including an education building, infirmary, mess hall and kitchen, recreation building, supply warehouse, officers' quarters, two garages, blacksmith shop, two latrines and eight barracks. Classified as "permanent" frame buildings, all were built according to standard plans supplied by the Ninth Army Corps. Most of these buildings stood on a small rise overlooking an unpaved service and loading area that separated the camp from the Old Park, immediately to the southwest. Few changes occurred after 1935. The most notable took place in 1939, when a stone/concrete retaining wall, loading dock, and sign board were installed at the east end of the parking area. (Excerpted from HABS No. ID-103, p. 47)



## Camp BR-27 (continued)

### DISPOSITION/CURRENT STATUS

In the fall of 1941, steps were initiated to dispose of the buildings at Camp BR-27. In January 1942, S.R. Marean, Minidoka Project manager, wrote to the headquarters of the Ninth Corps Area in San Francisco that “The fixed type truck shelters at this camp are now occupied by CCC equipment and are not now available. Fixed type barracks and other similar buildings belonging to the army are not now in use and may be salvaged for the purposes outlined in your letter . . .” Two months later, S.R. Marean wrote to the Commissioner that he had security concerns about the empty camp buildings located in such close proximity to Minidoka Dam and Powerplant, both vital structures. Due to the war, there were concerns that the buildings could offer shelter and concealment for a possible attempt at sabotage. Camp BR-27 was transferred to Reclamation for the agency’s use on December 1, 1942. Thereafter, all remaining buildings were gradually either demolished or removed.

Camp BR-27's only structural remains are some mortared, rubble, lava rock foundation fragments that were originally part of the loading dock complex built by the CCC in 1939. On the higher terrain above the service and loading area, the campgrounds survive as an open, level, irrigated lawn.

### SOURCES

Civilian Conservation Corps, “Pocatello Chieftan Annual,” Pocatello District, 1936, from collections at Idaho Historical Society.

Fraserdesign, *Walcott Park, Historic American Building Survey No. ID-103*, prepared for the Bureau of Reclamation, March 1998.

Reclamation, General Records of CCC Activities, Boxes 12, 13, 47, 48, and 112, Entry 22, RG 115, National Archives, Denver.

**Recorded by: Christine Pfaff, Bureau of Reclamation, Denver, 2009**



Camp BR-27: Minidoka Project, view of loading dock at CCC camp, February 6, 1941 (Box 1, Entry 31, RG 115, National Archives, Denver).