

56-787

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.



### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Animas Cañon Toll Road

Other names/site number: Animas City-Silverton Wagon Road, 5LP.1258 (5LP1258.3, 5LP1258.8, 5LP1258.9, 5LP1258.10, 5LP1258.11), 5SA1466 (5SA.1466.1, 5SA.1466.2, 5SA.1466.3, 5SA.1466.4, 5SA.1466.5, 5SA.1466.6, 5SA.1466.7, 5SA.1466.8, 5SA.1466.9, 5SA.1466.10, 5SA.1466.11)

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

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

### 2. Location

Street & number: Between Durango and Silverton on the San Juan National Forest

City or town: Durango, Silverton State: Colorado County: La Plata and San Juan

Not For Publication:  n/a Vicinity:  X

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this x nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property x meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national  statewide  local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

A  B  C  D

<u>Molly Mestay</u>		<u>2/6/2017</u>
<b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b>		<b>Date</b>
<u>Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Region, Regional Heritage Manager</u>		
<b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b>		
In my opinion, the property <u>X</u> meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.		
<u>Dorothy K. Norton</u>		<u>1/20/17</u>
<b>Signature of commenting official:</b>		<b>Date</b>
<u>Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer</u>		<u>History Colorado</u>
<b>Title :</b>		<b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b>

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**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)

Joe Edson H. Beall  
Signature of the Keeper

3-27-17  
Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
_____	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
<u>16</u>	_____	structures
_____	<u>3</u>	objects
<u>16</u>	<u>3</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Transportation (road-related)

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Not in Use

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

N/A

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

Other: Native Stone

Earth

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

The Animas Cañón Toll Road, constructed between 1876-1878, was an approximately 29-mile long road linking Animas City to Silverton in the southwest corner of Colorado. This road was the primary southern corridor for transporting supplies to and ores from the mining camps around Silverton before the construction of the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad (D&RG) in 1882. The road started from Rockwood (approximately 17 miles north of Durango) and headed north and east to enter the Animas River Corridor via Cascade Creek, roughly following the Animas River northeastward to Silverton, its terminus. There are currently 16 extant segments, all within the San Juan National Forest, that retain sufficient integrity and contribute to the property's significance, totaling approximately four miles in length. The segments of extant historic wagon road have high integrity and retain the construction techniques and setting of the original 1870s road. No longer extant portions of the original wagon road have been obliterated by railroad (1882), dam (1904), and a private residential and golf course development (1980s and 2010 expansion).

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## Narrative Description

Between 2012 and 2013, Alpine Archaeological Consultants, Inc. (Alpine) conducted an intensive cultural resources inventory along the route of approximately 14.6 miles of the Animas Cañón Toll Road (5LP.1258/5SA.1466), also known as the Animas City-Silverton Wagon Road. The following information relies heavily upon the report produced from this investigation (Satterwhite and Horn 2013:1).

The wagon road originally ended at its north terminus just south of the D&RG (now the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad [D&SNG]) bridge across the Animas River, just south of Silverton, where the elevation is 9,190' (2,801 m). From Silverton, the Animas Cañón Toll Road crossed Mineral Creek and then crossed to the east side of the Animas River in nearly the same location as the current railroad bridge. About one mile below the bridge, a toll house was erected where the canyon narrowed. After crossing the river, the road stayed on the east bank for 7½ miles to a second bridge crossing the river at Elk Park that was probably near the current railroad bridge (see Figure 3: Modern Elk Park Bridge Map). The route then stayed on the west side of the canyon to the mouth of Cascade Creek in order to eliminate the need for any additional bridges, which were expected to be vulnerable to washing out on an annual basis (M'Cauley 1878:1799; Nossaman 1993:87).

Keeping the road on the west side of the canyon was possible in most places where a narrow bench existed above the rushing channel of the river, but required major engineering feats to be achieved at four locations. Elk Point, just south of the Elk Park bridge, required a 300'-long fill around a solid rock point. The fill was 14'-wide at its base, 12'-wide at its top, and extended 6' below the level of the river; it contained 36,600 cubic feet of rock fill. Rough Point, 10 miles below Silverton, required a deep cut to avoid crossing the river. Big Point, probably opposite Ruby Creek 13 miles below Silverton, had a 500'-long rock fill that was 12' wide at its base, 10' wide at its top, and extended 13' above the river. Island Point, just south of an island in the river about 1¼ miles above Crazy Woman Creek, had a 170' long fill and a short, but deep cut (Nossaman 1993:87). In some places where no bench along the river existed and it was not possible to build a fill, blasting of a notch on the cliff side was necessary and a retaining wall was built below to retain the roadbed. The retaining walls were 20-30' tall in some places. When Cascade Creek was reached, it was spanned by a wood-framed bridge supported by cribbing of similar construction to the others. The road then climbed out of the Animas River Canyon on a steep, winding grade that required stone retaining walls to hold the roadbed on the steep side slope. Upon reaching the summit of Cascade Hill, the road crossed Little Cascade Creek and followed Elbert Creek through an area now covered by present Electra Lake and southward past Rockwood to Baker's Bridge, where the lower toll house may have been situated (Nossaman 1993:87-88).

Vegetation in the road area consists of a Douglas fir-aspen community including Douglas fir, aspen, ponderosa pine, spruce, Gambel oak, common juniper, and a wide variety of shrubs, grasses, and forbs. Riparian areas include willow and alder.

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Geologically, the area is complex. The Needle Mountains form the southwestern part of the San Juan range are some of the most rugged in Colorado with many peaks over 13,000' and four over 14,000'. The area contains precipitous south-draining canyons. The Needle Mountains are unlike other parts of the San Juans in that they are comprised almost entirely of Precambrian basement rock uplifted during the Laramide orogeny as the core of the range. Furthermore, the Needle Mountains were never covered by younger volcanic rocks of the San Juan volcanic field (Reed and Ellis 2009). Much of the western portion of the range is exposed metamorphic rock, particularly in much of the Animas River Canyon. The northeastern part of the range consists primarily of quartzite, schist, conglomerate, and Uncompahgre Formation sedimentary rocks. The Grenadier Range, adjacent to the northern portion of the nomination boundary, is geologically unique in that in no other part of Colorado does the quartzite and conglomerate form comparable peaks (Reed and Ellis 2009). The landscape within the area is extremely active with evidence of major mud, rock, and snow slides visible throughout the corridor.

The wagon road's construction varies depending on the terrain. The wagon road is approximately 10' wide throughout its length. At the lower lying elevations where it lies on the valley floor it is primarily a leveled area, occasionally lined by the rocks removed from the levelled portion of the road, without formal construction. At these lower elevations it runs through primarily ponderosa pine forests. Where the road descends towards the bottom of the Animas River Canyon at the eastern end of Electra Lake the rapid elevation loss (from 8,360-7,720 feet) required more intensive construction techniques. In this portion of the road, rock retaining walls of locally available stone up to 10' high were constructed to allow a gentler descent into the canyon.

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### **Segment Descriptions**

The segments are described from south to north (see Nominated Segments Location Map). These segments include all extant segments located on Forest Service lands. These segments are discontinuous due to the interspersing of private lands between the segments on Forest Service and the destruction of the wagon road (primarily due to the construction of the D&RG, now D&SNG).

#### 5LP.1258.8, (photo 19, Map 1)

Segment 1258.8 is a 4,950' long portion of the toll road extending between Chris Park Campground and Haviland Lake Campground. It is well preserved and is mostly intact with few modern intrusions. Depending on the topography, there are fills where the road ran next to wetlands, cuts on side slopes, and cuts where the road crossed through bedrock humps. Though there do not appear to be any features such as purposeful retaining walls, there is clear evidence for almost the entire length that a wagon road existed. Most of the rocky areas also exhibit linear berms of scattered cobbles, probably as much related to annual or periodic maintenance, as to the original construction of the road. For the most part, the road is easily followed, except in a few short sections where the road crosses or closely parallels Elbert Creek as the road approaches Haviland Lake Campground from the south.

#### 5LP.1258.3, (photo 20, Map 1)

Segment 5LP.128.3 is a 1800' long portion of the toll road that extends from Haviland Lake Campground north to the north line of Section 25, which is the Forest Service boundary with private land to the north. It can be traced heading north from just west of the restrooms at the north end of the Electra Lake Campground, immediately climbing a hill to the north-northwest, then winding through rolling topography and a dense ponderosa forest. Though no specific features, such as retaining walls, are present, numerous road cuts are clearly visible, with depth up to 3'. In one place near the south end of the segment, the road has been cut into bedrock, with bedrock cobbles thrown to each side. The segment shows little in the way of modern intrusions and is well preserved.

#### 5LP.1258.9, (photo 1, Map 2)

Segment 5LP.1258.9 is a 8,448'-long portion of the toll road that begins northeast of Electra Lake's Stagecoach Dam and spillway. 5LP.1258.9 is divided into two parts (a and b) due to a small inholding of private land that for the purposes of this nomination will not be included in the nominated segments. 5LP.1258.9a measures 7,140' x 10'. 5LP.1258.9b is approximately 447' northeast and measures 100' x 10'. The segment runs southeast along the slope above Little Cascade Creek canyon before turning generally northeastward after an inflection point in the slope. The beginning portion of road manifests as a well-preserved cut that traverses the slope, though the route has been partly covered by soil from the slope above. Currently, this portion of road varies between 5-7' wide and is used as a hiking trail. It then traverses the east-facing slope between Little Cascade Creek and Cascade Creek and is upslope from a series of switchbacks in the road. This section is approximately 7' wide with a moderate amount of soil and rock slump, but more than the preceding portion. There are then two switchbacks and the road is a 6-7'-wide cut with minor areas of soil and rock slump on the uphill side that only

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minimally obscures areas of the road. Segment 5LP.1258.9 ends at the foot of the slope where the road loses its integrity and visibility in the Animas River floodplain.

Current use of the segment is as a portion of a hiking trail that travels between the eastern end of Electra Lake and the bottom of the Animas River Canyon near the Cascade Wye of the D&SNG rail line and a footbridge crossing the Animas River.

Segment 5LP.1258.9 has seven retaining features (see Figure 1 below). Feature 1 is just east of an inflection point in the topography and consists of a dry-laid, stacked, talus-block retaining wall that supports the road on the downslope side. The retaining wall is about 5' tall and ranges from two to six courses. The wall is 28' long and only one stone wide. Feature 2 is 367' east of Feature 1 and consists of a substantial talus-block retaining wall between 4 and 14 courses (3-20') tall. The wall runs 80' along the southwestern side of the road segment and is one or two stones wide. Feature 3 is also a talus-block retaining wall that measures 4' tall (4-5 courses) and 30' long. The wall may have originally extended farther east but has been obscured by slump. All blocks in these features are native stones and are generally 8-20"-long rectangular and square stones. Talus outcrops are numerous along the slopes and material could have easily been collected within close proximity to the features. Individual stones appear to have been selected so that little or no shaping was required to stack them. Feature 4 is a small alignment of stones creating a pavement of stone across a rill that crosses the road. The antiquity of this feature is uncertain. Feature 5 is a retaining wall constructed to raise the grade of the toll road across an ephemeral drainage. The feature is 16' long x 3' high, and comprised of about four courses of stone blocks. The wall is one to two stones wide. Feature 6 is another stone retaining wall about 30' north and downslope of Feature 5. This feature is on the downslope (eastern) side of the road and helps keep a consistent grade across a low dip in the topography. The road is 10-15' wide at the location. The retaining wall measures about 36' long and three to five courses tall (2-3 feet tall). Feature 7 consists of a stacked stone retaining wall constructed where the road crosses a talus slope. The wall is 27' long and 3-10' tall, made of four to twelve courses of stones. The lower courses are stacked tighter and more formally than the upper courses. The lower (northern) end is truncated by a rockslide. Because a talus slope is in immediate proximity, the wall has some larger stones included in its construction.

5LP.128.9 was evidently reused for a short time beginning in 1896. A Road Petition filed in 1896 (Road Petition, January 28, 1896, La Plata County Courthouse, County Clerk's Office, Road Record A, Page 202) describes using the route of the Animas Cañón Toll Road to the floor of the Animas River Canyon, whereupon a new route crossed the river 200 yards above the Cascade Section House and met the Needle Mountain Wagon Road, which had been built in 1881, on the east side of the river. The original wagon road on the west side of the river above Cascade had probably been obliterated by the construction of the railroad, thus necessitating a new road on the eastern side of the river for local traffic. The section of road identified in the 1896 Road Petition was improved and reported upon in a Road Viewers Report on March 30, 1896 (Road Viewers Report, March 30, 1896, La Plata County Courthouse, County Clerk's Office, Road Record A, Page 202).



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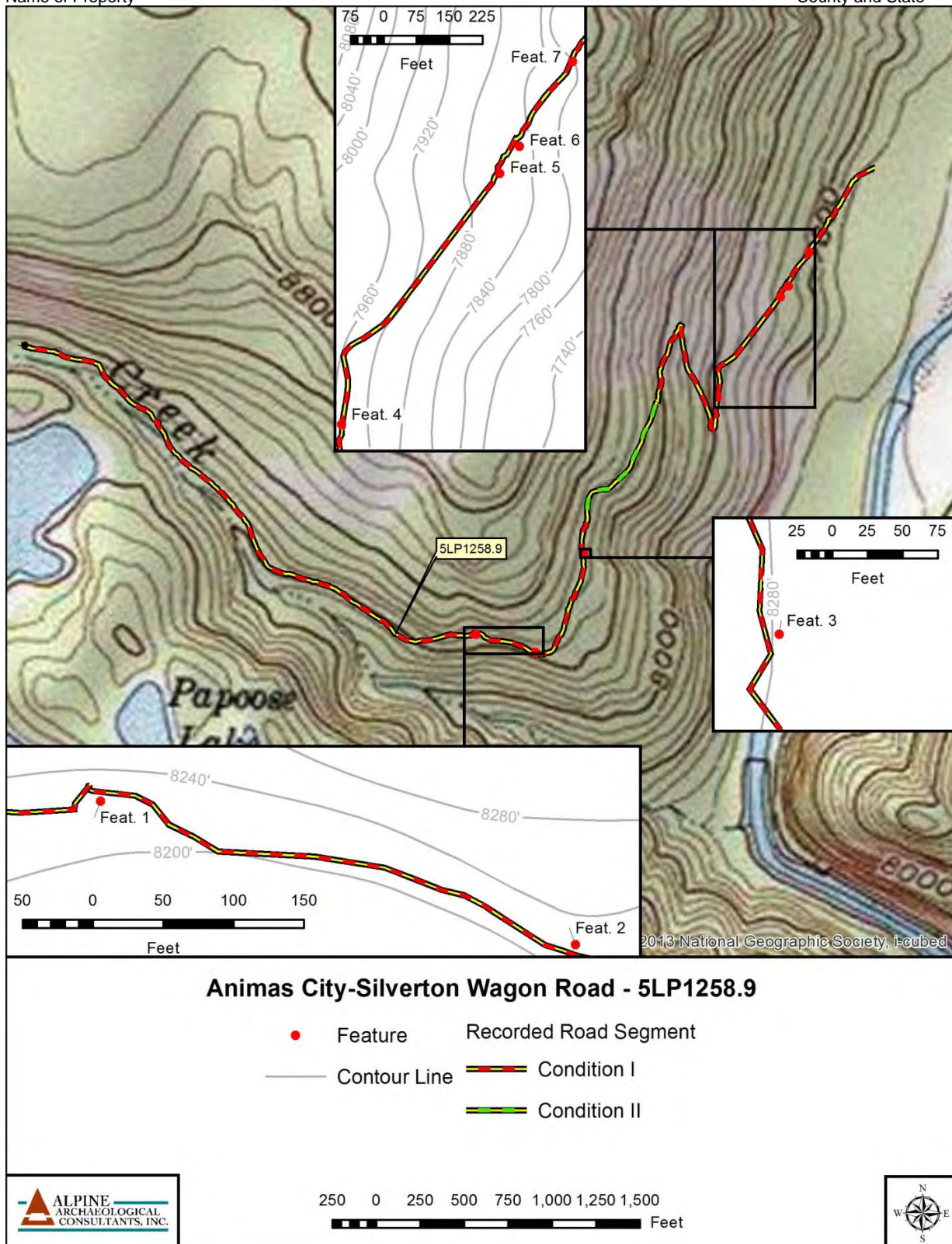
The Road Viewers Report listed four entities who certified the construction of the road: the San Juan Lumber Company, Louis Smith, E. N. Whiten, and Peter Daum. The San Juan Lumber Company opened a lumber mill, likely to provide timbers to the railroad construction, at the base of Cascade Hill in 1882 (Nossaman 1998:178). Whiten served as the president of the Bullion Mountain Mining Company in the Needle Mountain Mining District. Louis Smith was the successor owner of the homestead claim of 1882 by Samuel Smith, which was the former location of the Cascade House. Peter Daum was a homesteader that patented his land in 1891 in what is now Electra Lake. Both Smith and Daum sold their lands to make way for the filling of Electra Lake in 1904-1905. The petitions show that the new road was to facilitate mining and logging in the Needleton area with the homesteaders likely providing hay and other local products available from ranchers outside the canyon.

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**Animas City-Silverton Wagon Road - 5LP1258.9**

- Feature
- Contour Line
- Recorded Road Segment
- Condition I
- Condition II



250 0 250 500 750 1,000 1,250 1,500  
 Feet



Figure 1

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5LP.1258.10, (photos 2-3, Map 2)

Segment 5LP.1258.10 is a short, 118'-long section that travels in a southwest to northeast direction up and over a toe slope and talus field beginning near milepost 487.3 of the D&SNG rail line. The road grade is between 7-10' wide and partially obscured on the upslope side by talus. Much of the road construction was done by moving the talus stone, requiring no formal grading of the southern end of the segment. On the southern half of the segment, a couple of medium-sized piñon pines are growing in the grade, indicating the antiquity of the road. There is a dry-laid rock retaining wall supporting the southern end of the segment as it begins its climb up the slope. The wall is between 45' and 50' long and up to 20' tall. The blocks used in its construction are larger than most of the other observed retaining walls, being 20-40" long, and obtained from the talus slope. The wall is about four- to five-courses tall with the stacked stone placed on top of large talus boulders. The northern end of the wall is the result of pushing stone from the roadbed rather than formal stacking of stones.

5LP.1258.11, (photos 6-9, Map 2)

Segment 5LP.1258.11 is a 946' long vestige of the Animas Cañón Toll Road west of the railroad tracks and south of milepost 478.5 of the D&SNG rail line. The road is visible as a 7-10' wide swale on the river floodplain running initially on a west to east trajectory and then becoming a distinct cut-and-fill grade winding in a more east-northeast direction around a rock outcrop. It then becomes obscured by talus. The eastern portion manifests as a highly visible and obvious travelway cut into the slope with small stones cleared from the road that are stacked informally along the margins for 774'. No distinct features have been observed along the segment.

Approximately 1/4 mile northeast of Segment 5LP.1258.11 are two foundation footprints of the original Cascade Railroad Station structures, a root cellar depression, and remnants of an improved spring. The station house is not within the period of significance for the Animas Cañón Toll Road, and thus, was not formally recorded. Artifacts in the vicinity of the station remains included purple glass fragments, stoneware crockery fragments, earthenware china sherds, and cut nails. A modern fire line has been bulldozed across the east side of the site, disturbing some of the artifacts.

5SA.1466.1, (photo18, Map 3)

Segment 5SA.1466.1 is a faint road section that is 144' x 10-12' wide running initially in a south to north direction and then bending to the northeast. It is a swale with intermittent and minor evidence of linear stone alignments along the edges. This segment is north of Needleton and west of the railroad tracks and river between Ruby Creek and Noname Creek. Additionally, a distinct vegetation break is noticeable on the southwestern end of the segment. Evidence for the stone alignments' antiquity includes depositional build-up of sediment and growth of moss and lichen on the stones. The northeastern end of the segment is subsumed by a modern bulldozed fire line clearing. No features are associated with the segment.

5SA.1466.2, (photo 4, Map 3)

Segment 5SA.1466.2 is an alignment measuring 157' x 9' that climbs in a south-southwest to north-northeast direction west of the Animas River's No Name Rapids near railroad milepost

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485.7. The southern end of the segment begins at the northern edge of a low marsh area and climbs up and across a slope. A few yards from the south-southwestern end is an ephemeral drainage that has evidence of stacked stones that represent a remnant of informal bridge abutments enabling the road to cross the drainage. Beyond the drainage, the route is evident as a slightly depressed clearing of talus stones climbing the slope. At the north-northwestern end, the segment loses its visibility in rockslide debris from No Name Slide.

5SA.1466.3, (photo 16, Map 3)

Segment 5SA.1466.3 is a 168' x 10' section of road north of the No Name Slide. It follows a similar southwest-to-northeast trajectory as segment 5SA.1466.2. The road route traverses down and across the slope before being lost in swampy bottomland at the base of the slope.

5SA.1466.4, (photo 17, Map 4)

Segment 5SA.1466.4 is a 199' x 8-10' portion of the road on the eastern side of the railroad, between the grade and the river, south of Ten Mile Creek near railroad milepost 487 of the D&SNG rail line. The road is visible as a vegetation break and slightly built-up road crown crossing a flat floodplain in a west-southwest to east-northeast direction.

Near the north terminus of Segment 5SA.1466.4 are three grave markers. The granite grave markers appear to be recent installations commemorating the deaths of three individuals and may not be on the actual grave locations. It is uncertain if they mark the actual grave sites because, other than the markers, no physical evidence indicating burials could be seen. All of the markers appear to be recently made, are in the same style, and are set in cement. One gravestone denotes "Baby Girl Schneider, Child of Franz and Minnie Schneider." Franz and Minnie Schneider were the proprietors of the nearby Ten Mile House (no longer extant) in the 1880s that provided lodging and, at times, mail delivery. A second headstone is marked "William P. Kennedy, Needle Mountain Prospector." William Kennedy was an early prospector in the Needle Mountain area. The third marker is for Harry C. Dalton, who was the bookkeeper for the railroad; he killed himself in the canyon in 1882. All three died in 1881 or 1882.

5SA.1466.5, (photo 10, Map 4)

Segment 5SA.1466.5 is a road section that begins in the floodplain just northeast of Ten Mile Creek on the southeastern side of the railroad tracks at approximately milepost 487.2 of the D&SNG rail line. The road is visible as a 313' x 8' slight swale that appears as a break in the vegetation with minor clearing of stone debris to the sides. Currently, several large boulders are within the road, but all evidence indicates they have come to rest there relatively recently. At the northeastern end of the segment, the road rises from the floodplain by an enhanced earthen ramp. At this point, the road route becomes obliterated by the railroad.

5SA.1466.6, (photo 11, Map 4)

Segment 5SA.1466.6 is a 763' long subtle, linear swale that is east of and down slope of the railroad tracks and just off the toe of a cliff band. The segment is north of Ten Mile Creek between mileposts 487 and 488 of the D&SNG rail line on the same southwest-to-northeast trajectory as Segment 5SA.1466.5. The segment is about 10-12' wide with evidence of some

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cleared stone along its edges. At the northeastern end, the swale feeds into a graded and enhanced earthen ramp rising from the floodplain before it is lost in railroad blast debris and the railroad grade.

5SA.1466.7, (photo 5, Map 4)

Segment 5SA.1466.7 is a 1,475' x 10' road section running in a south-to-north direction that includes two stone retaining walls (Features 9 and 10). The southern end of the segment begins west of the railroad tracks near railroad milepost 488. The remains of an out-of-period cabin are near the southern end of the segment, and the segment continues until it is lost in an open area that has been altered by a probable fire line. Feature 9 is an 18' long, talus-block retaining wall on the eastern side of the road that is 1-4' tall made of three to four courses of 8-12" long, unshaped stones. Feature 10 is a similarly constructed retaining wall north of Feature 9. It is a two to three-course, 2' tall, talus-block retaining wall, also constructed on the eastern side of the road. Both of these features were designed to keep the road relatively level and pass over small ephemeral drainages.

The cabin remains are out-of-period with all observed diagnostic artifacts dating to the early 1900s. In addition, towards the northern end of the segment are two artifact scatters adjacent to the road that date from the 1910s to 1930s.

5SA.1466.8, (photo 12, Map 5)

Segment 5SA.1466.8 is a 515' x 8' road that cuts in a south-to-north direction across a slope west of the railroad tracks and south of railroad milepost 489. Slope erosion and tree growth have impacted the segment somewhat. Adjacent to the road trace are the remains of a telegraph pole from the railroad.

5SA.1466.9, (photo 13, Map 5)

Segment 5SA.1466.9 is a linear swale that measures 140' x 6-8'. The swale has evidence of obvious antiquity that includes sediment deposition within the road bed and lichen growth on the stones that intermittently line the edges of the road. An ephemeral drainage obliterates the route on the southern end. On the northern end, the segment cuts across the slope and takes a hard turn eastward off the slope toward some flats before being subsumed by the railroad grade.

5SA.1466.10, (photo 14, Map 5)

Segment 5SA.1466.10 is a 199' long, shallow swale that creates a 6' wide linear break through the surrounding vegetation. The segment runs from south to north and then bends eastward. At the southern end, the trace begins near four abandoned 55-gallon drums on the western side of the railroad grade. The northeastern end of the route is subsumed by a camp and a series of bulldozed lines, likely associated with the building of the newer railroad bridge over the Animas River that replaced the original bridge in 1964. The D&SNG bridge is at railroad milepost 489.9.

5SA.1466.11, (photo 15, Map 5)

Segment 5SA.1466.11 is a 556' long road remnant on the eastern side of the Animas River. The toll road crossed the river approximately where the current railroad bridge is situated south of

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Elk Park. The segment runs from southeast to northwest, bending west-northwest, following the toe of a west-facing slope just north of the Elk Park Wye and east of D&SNG rail line milepost 490.7. The route is slightly graded, and a low berm is evident along its eastern side. The road trace hugs the toe of the slope in order to avoid the lower meadow of Elk Park, which would have been marshy and wet during certain seasons. The remnant is being altered by erosion, sediment fill from the marshy area, and human traffic. Elk Park is a popular hunter, horse, and hiker camp. Years of camp use has obliterated any definitive evidence of the wagon road south of the wye. The northern end of the route can be followed until it intersects the railroad right-of-way.

### **Integrity**

The road's setting, feeling and association remains much the same as it was during its initial construction. Because the road corridor is no longer easily accessible the setting is much as it was during the road's initial development, a sparsely inhabited forested area. The two segments near the Haviland Lake recreation complex are the only two to have received a significant alteration in setting, though the complex is not visible for the majority of the trail. The same can be said of the feeling of the area that the road corridor encompasses; the occasional use of the corridor by the active D&SNG alters the feeling for a short amount of time daily, but the feeling is then restored to one that is similar to that of the original time period. The association has not been altered on these extant segments because they are still much as they were when originally constructed and have not been associated with other uses or events in subsequent years.

The extant portions recorded for this nomination are located on Forest Service lands in an area that is not easily accessed, as there are few roads leading to these segments. Once the toll road descends to the Animas River it is only accessible via train or hiking. This is much as it was during the road's original construction when it was built to give much needed access to these nearly inaccessible areas of land.

Where there are extant segments there is little change to them due to their inaccessible nature and their location on Forest Service lands where land alterations are closely monitored. The D&SNG Railroad that has obliterated much of the original road has also added to the salvation of the remaining portions as few visitors now hike or use the canyon outside of riding the train or hiking from the three trailheads (Purgatory Flats, Elk Creek, and Haviland Lake) that are located along the corridor containing the remains of the Animas Cañón Toll Road.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

### Criteria Considerations

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

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Transportation

### Period of Significance

1876-1882

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**Significant Dates**

N/A

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

**Architect/Builder**

Animas Cañón Toll Road Company

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Animas Cañón Toll Road is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of *transportation* for its service as the main route between Animas City and Silverton during the development of the mining camps in the surrounding region. The road was operable from 1877 until 1882 when a branch of the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad (now D&SNG, 5LP.302/5SA.14; National Historic Landmark 7/4/1961; National Register 10/15/1966; NRIS.19661015) was constructed over much of the road's prism (original footprint) and became the primary means of transport between Durango and Silverton.

Prior to the toll road's construction, isolation was an impediment to the settlement of Silverton and the development of its mines. Although trails and roads existed prior to 1877, they were impassable for nearly six months of the year and sufficient supplies and equipment were brought in with great difficulty. Only the highest grade ore would be transported out, and transportation of coal to run the mines and mills was prohibitively expensive. Bringing mining equipment in was also very challenging. Although the roads from Del Norte provided more direct routes to railheads, they passed through high elevations and were seasonal. With the construction of the Animas Cañón Toll Road, it was possible to freight in and out of Silverton nearly year-round. The toll road opened Silverton to easier access from the south and provided a ready market for agricultural products of the lower Animas Valley. It also gave the new town of Animas City a greater reason for being. Of particular importance was the stimulation the road provided for agricultural production in the Animas Valley and hay raising in Hermosa Park with Silverton as the primary market. The developers of the Toll Road hoped that improved transportation would stimulate investment which would make it possible for the mines in the region to demonstrate their value and enable Silverton to become a regional population, supply, forwarding, and processing center (see *Historic Mining Resources of San Juan County, Colorado* Multiple Property Documentation Form). This however would not become a reality until the arrival of the railroad. Construction of the toll road through the Animas Canyon demonstrated the feasibility



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of travel along that route, which then resulted in construction of the D&RG to Silverton through the canyon in 1882, ushering in the next phase of economic development and prosperity in the Silverton mining districts on an exponential scale.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Because enough aspects of integrity are present for all of the presented extant segments, all are recommended to support the NRHP eligibility of the Animas Cañón Toll Road under Criterion A. They have sufficient physical integrity to convey the wagon road's importance to the history of the region. Although the roads from Del Norte provided more direct routes to railroads, they passed through higher elevations and were seasonal. The Animas Cañón Toll Road route was also plagued with heavy snows, avalanches, flooding, and mud slides. However, this route avoided the high elevations encountered on Stony Pass, Engineer Pass, Cinnamon Pass, and Red Mountain Pass. It also provided a direct connection with the lower Animas Valley farms and the Durango area coal fields which provided necessary food and fuels for the Silverton Mining Districts. Construction of the toll road through the Animas Canyon also demonstrated the feasibility of travel along that route, which then resulted in construction of the D&RG to Silverton through the canyon in 1882, ushering in the most critical phase of economic development and prosperity in the Silverton Mining Districts on an exponential scale. The arrival of the D&RG finally made mining in the Silverton Districts economically feasible. The railroad brought improved and cheaper transportation connecting Silverton to vital markets and the investments that made it possible for the mines in the region to demonstrate their value and enabled Silverton to become a regional population, supply, forwarding and processing center.

Roads do not typically maintain significance as archaeological properties under Criterion D as archaeological data recovery of a road bed would not be expected to yield information important to our understanding of history. It is possible that undetected buried archaeological materials may exist along the route of the toll road, such as at the way stations along the route, but these were not evident during a survey of the road in 2013 (Satterwhite and Horn 2013: 53). If any sites associated with the wagon road have survived destruction from slope movement within the canyon, flooding of the Animas River, and construction of the D&RG (now the Durango and Silverton Narrow Gauge or D&SNG) in 1882, they may very well be considered of archaeological importance, but no such sites were found. Such archaeological remains will need to be evaluated separately if found in the future.

### **History of the Property**

#### **Early Wagon Road Development**

In order for the mining industry of the Silverton area to develop, improvement of the transportation system in and out of Baker's Park, as the early settlement of Silverton was known, was imperative. The citizens of Del Norte, a community approximately 70 miles (as the crow

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flies) east of Silverton, realized that their position as the gateway to the mines in the San Juan Mountains was in peril and began to work on the road problem. The Del Norte and Baker's Park Toll Road Company was organized in April 1875 by residents of Del Norte, but did little to actually build a road toward Silverton (Nossaman 2006:234-235). Most of the effort in improving transportation came from within the communities of the upper Animas Valley looking in all directions for an easier way in and out. San Juan County took steps toward improving roads within the upper Animas Valley with the establishment of road districts in 1875. Road improvements were made on the route to Howardsville and Animas Forks, including bridge construction (Nossaman 2006:272). Efforts to build a road up Cunningham Gulch were initiated by the Rio Grande & Cunningham Gulch Wagon and Toll Road Company in September 1876 by George Greene and Edward Innis. The road in Cunningham Gulch was completed that fall and plans were made to extend it over Stony Pass into the Rio Grande River drainage the next year, but the road never continued any farther (Nossaman 1993:98). Jacob Hanks, Theodore Schoch, and Hiram W. Ward formed the San Juan & Silverton Turnpike Company in 1876 to develop a better route over the divide from Antelope Park on the upper Rio Grande. Their little-used route bypassed Stony Pass and entered the upper Animas River drainage by way of Maggie Gulch (Nossaman 2006:309). Work on roads progressed somewhat on the upper Rio Grande River in 1878 and 1879 with the establishment of the Antelope Park & Carr Cabin Toll Road. The Stony Pass Wagon Toll Road Company also worked on a section of road between Grassy Hill and Timber Hill. In order to complete the wagon road over Stony Pass, the Silverton & Grassy Hill Toll Road Company was formed in 1879; it was financed by subscriptions gathered from citizens of Silverton (Nossaman 1993:282). Although the completed road over Stony Pass became the preferred route into Silverton from Del Norte, the improvements were eclipsed by improved transportation routes developed to access Silverton from the south.

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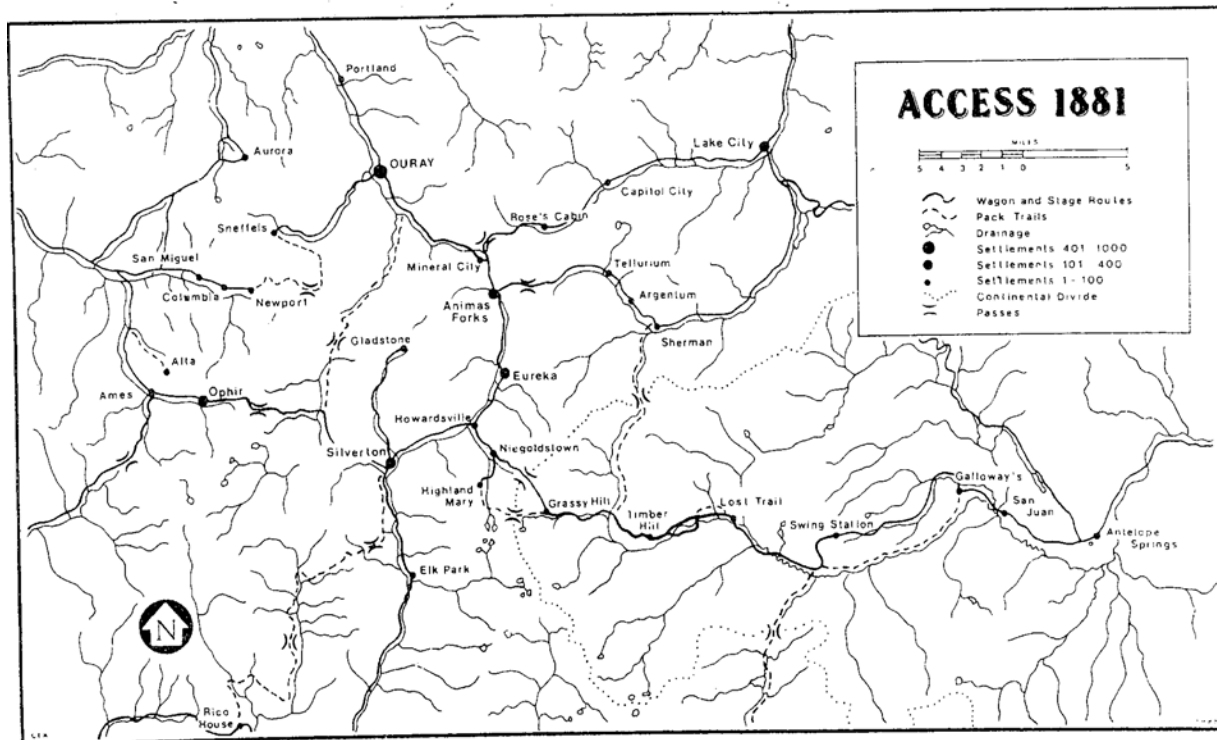


Figure 2 Wagon Roads, Stage Routes and Trails in the San Juans, 1881. Kinqvist, 1987

Because no real settlements existed south of Silverton in the lower Animas River drainage area before 1876, except for the small mining camp of Parrott City on the La Plata River, the impetus to improve roads and trails in that direction was initially slight. The expansion of roads westward from the San Luis Valley, Santa Fe, and Taos noted by William A. Marshall in 1875 demonstrated a growing impetus toward accessing Silverton and the mines of the upper Animas River from the south (Marshall 1876:323). The apparently unsolvable difficulties of traveling over the mountains from Del Norte and Lake City, the agricultural potential of the lower Animas Valley, and the presence of coal as a fuel source stimulated interest in travel improvements southward. The first organization to propose improvements was the Las Animas Toll & Wagon Road & Land Company of Henry F. Tower, Isaac Peyton, Archie Fist and others, which was incorporated on December 15, 1873. These same individuals formed the Las Animas Toll, Wagon Road, Land & Town Company on April 14, 1874. Dempsey Reese, F. S. Ketchum, J. T. Bostwick, John Ufford and others incorporated the Baker's Park & Animas Valley Toll Road Company on January 25, 1875 (Nossaman 1993:87). The Las Animas Valley & San Juan Mining & Turnpike Company was also organized in 1875 to build a road between Silverton and Tierra Amarilla by way of the lower Animas Valley and Pagosa Hot Springs. Little more than paperwork seems to have been the result of the founding of these companies. The Silverton & Hermosa Turnpike Company, incorporated May 22, 1875, planned a route between Silverton and the lower Animas Valley whose description was remarkably similar to the route that was actually built the following two years. The proposed road was to run along the Animas River from Silverton to Cascade Creek, up Cascade and Little Cascade creeks to Ignacio Lake, and then southward generally along the route of present U.S. Highway 550. Incorporators were Dempsey

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Reese, Frank S. Ketchum, John L. Ufford, William Munroe, E. N. Cushing, G. W. Gorham, John F. Bostwick, and William Greene (Nossaman 1993:87; 2006:234-235). The new county government took a small hand in the transportation issue south of Silverton in 1875 by declaring “the ordinarily traveled route from Silverton to Parrott City” a public road and making arrangements for the trail on the southeast side of Sultan Mountain to be improved (Nossaman 2006:272). Farther down the Animas Valley, Hans Aspaas built a toll bridge across the Animas River near Junction Creek, and Mason Greenlee, H. B. Brookover, and S. H. Crowell evidently did some work on a route between Silverton and Hermosa that year. Despite the interest and some expenditure of effort, nothing resembling an actual road resulted (Nossaman 2006:273).

### **Animas Cañón Toll Road Company**

On July 26, 1876, the Animas Cañón Toll Road Company was incorporated by James L. Wightman, Joseph W. Wallace, Joseph B. Fay, and Royal C. Bradshaw. Their approach was to follow the Animas River south from Silverton, climb out of the canyon at the mouth of Cascade Creek, and then continue southward through the gentle, lake-covered terrain below the Hermosa Cliffs to the lower Animas River Valley where the new town of Animas City was becoming established. Wightman was the primary force and financier of the project. Wightman was born April 6, 1821 in Dumfries, Scotland. He came to America in 1840, first living in New York and then moving to New Jersey for 10 years. While in New Jersey, he married Margaret Stuart McGuffie on December 27, 1845. They had two daughters, Mary Jane, born in 1850, and Margaret A., born in 1852. His wife, Margaret, died about the time of the birth of their second daughter, and James remarried to Isabella Parker, also a native of Scotland, on May 27, 1853. The family moved to Shawnee County, Kansas in 1856 where Wightman was a farmer for six years. During the Civil War, he joined Company G of the 16th Kansas Cavalry and mustered out as First Lieutenant in 1865. He then returned to Kansas and built an ore mill on the Potawatomie Indian Reservation that was not profitable, so moved to Topeka and worked as a painter. His health failed, so he came to Colorado to mine in 1870. He was among the group that made the first discovery of gold in the Summitville Mining District in 1870 and split his time from 1872 to 1874 between there and the mines of the upper Animas River in Baker’s Park. Realizing the potential of the Animas River region, he began working on development schemes. Among the first was the Elbert Town, Road & Coal Mining Company in 1873 intended to reestablish the old Animas City townsite near the confluence of Elbert Creek and the Animas River that had been used in 1861. Included in this plan was improvement of the bridge across the Animas River at Baker’s Bridge. An outgrowth of this was his incorporation of the South Elbert Townsite Company, along with Newton Herbert Love and George E. Sill, later in 1873. Both of these ventures were premature, but demonstrated his understanding of the potential of the lower Animas Valley and its importance to the growth and development of Baker’s Park (Nossaman 2006:152). In 1875, Wightman sold his 3/16 interest in the Little Annie Mine in the Summitville Mining District to Nate Cornish for \$60,000. He used this money to finance the construction of the Animas Cañón Toll Road (Lewis Publishing Company 1890:891-892; Nossaman 1993:88).

One of the other incorporators of the company was Joseph Webster Wallace. Wallace was born in August 1850 in Ireland and came to America in 1866. He initially mined in Gilpin County and

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made his way to Baker's Park with Dempsey Reese in 1873 where he worked claims in Arrastra Gulch. His association with Dempsey Reese led to his being appointed the first San Juan county sheriff in 1874, a position he relinquished to John Greenhalgh in July of that year when he went to mine in the Summitville Mining District. It was during this time that he became acquainted with Wightman; the two had signed a pledge of ore in 1874 in an attempt to entice a smelter to Silverton (Nossaman 2006:135, 159, 161, 168, 202) *Denver Daily Times*, February 19, 1874:2). At the time the Animas Cañón Toll Road Company was formed, Wallace was reportedly "developing interests in the Animas Valley" (Nossaman 1993:87). By 1880, Wallace had moved to the Hermosa area of the Animas Valley where he raised hay. He married Alma Richardson of Hermosa in 1882 and they had eight children, seven of which lived to adulthood. He was the Clerk of the District Court by 1882 and was a Justice of the Peace at the time of his death on March 21, 1903 (Nossaman 1998:58) *Durango Democrat*, March 24, 1903:3; *Durango Wage Earner*, March 26, 1903:1).

Little is known of Joseph B. Fay and Royal C. Bradshaw. Fay was the president of the Tom Moore Mining Company near Eureka from 1880 to at least 1885, and Royal C. Bradshaw was the treasurer of the Animas Cañón Toll Road Company and a financial partner in the venture (Nossaman 1993:87). George B. Warner served as the Secretary for the company (*Colorado Weekly Chieftan* (Pueblo), January 24, 1878:1). Warner was born in February 1847 in Vermont and was the son-in-law of Wightman, having married Wightman's daughter, Margaret, in about 1871.

### **Construction by the Animas Cañón Toll Road Company**

Work began on the 32½-mile-long route of the Animas Cañón Toll Road on October 15, 1876; between 8 and 15 miles were constructed in 1876 (*Colorado Springs Gazette*, November 11, 1876:4; November 25, 1876:2). In 1877, work began by April and graders worked from each end; the route was sufficiently completed to allow some traffic by August of that year (*Colorado Weekly Chieftan* (Pueblo), April 26, 1877:1; Nossaman 1993:87). Lt. M'Cauley with the Army Corps of Engineers reported in his reconnaissance survey of the San Juan Mountains that all but four miles of the route had been completed at the time they passed over the route on September 29, 1877 (M'Cauley 1878:1798). M'Cauley noted that the new route was critical to the development of the Silverton area for the importation of produce and coal from the lower Animas Valley and so that mines could afford to ship their ore to market. Except for the construction of a wagon road in the gorge of the upper Uncompahgre River to Mineral City so that Ouray could be connected to Lake City, M'Cauley noted that the Animas Cañón Toll Road was the largest, most expensive, and most important construction project for improvement of transportation in the San Juan mountains to that time.

At the same time the Animas Cañón Toll Road was under construction, work was proceeding on improving the roads from Fort Garland, Costilla County and La Veta, Huerfano County to Animas City by way of Conejos and Pagosa Springs, both then in Conejos County. By May 1877, it was reported that all of the streams between Animas City and Pagosa Springs had been bridged and improvements to the road between Pagosa Springs and Conejos were underway

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(*Colorado Weekly Chieftan* (Pueblo), May 31, 1877:3). The final link to Silverton was the Animas Cañón Toll Road. By mid-November, the toll road was complete except for six miles of final surface grading (*Colorado Weekly Chieftan* (Pueblo), November 15, 1877:2). The benefits of the road were immediately apparent when Crooke & Company brought their new mill equipment to Silverton using the route in 1877 (Nossaman 1993:144). The importance of the route for early and late season travel was further demonstrated when, thwarted by snow on the route over Stony Pass, the Dunn Brothers reached the railhead at Pueblo by taking the Animas Cañón Toll Road from Silverton. Optimistically, it was announced that the road was in “passable condition, although rough and unfinished; the grade is very good and the road will be passable to loaded teams six or eight weeks sooner in the spring than the Stony Gulch route, and it will be passable to animals all winter” (*Colorado Weekly Chieftan* (Pueblo), November 22, 1877:1). In early 1878, it was noted that the toll road was open and supplies for Silverton were passing through Animas City (*Colorado Weekly Chieftan* (Pueblo), February 21, 1878:2).

### **Animas Cañón Toll Road Route and Construction Details**

From Silverton, the Animas Cañón Toll Road crossed Mineral Creek and then crossed to the east side of the Animas River in nearly the same location as the current railroad bridge (at the southwestern end of Silverton where the Animas River meets the Highway 550). The former wood-frame bridge was 217' long and 18' wide. It was floored with 6"-thick hewn timbers and had a railing. The bridge stood about 14' above the river, but was higher on the east side where it connected to solid rock (M'Cauley 1878:1800; Nossaman 1993:87). About one mile below the bridge, a toll house was erected where the canyon narrowed. After crossing the river, the road stayed on the east bank for 7½ miles to a second bridge crossing the river at Elk Park that was probably near the current railroad bridge. In September 1877, when Lt. M'Cauley passed along the route, the bridge had been washed out by the spring runoff and only three piers stood to mark its location (M'Cauley 1878:1800). When the bridge was rebuilt in October 1877, it was 362' long, supported by trestle bents and two cribs, and of similar construction to the bridge below Mineral Creek. The route then stayed on the west side of the canyon to the mouth of Cascade Creek in order to eliminate the need for any additional bridges, which were expected to be vulnerable to washing out on an annual basis (M'Cauley 1878:1799; Nossaman 1993:87).

Keeping the road on the west side of the canyon was possible in most places where a narrow bench existed above the rushing channel of the river, but required major engineering feats to be achieved at four locations. Elk Point, just south of the Elk Park Bridge, required a 300' fill around a solid rock point. The fill was 14' wide at its base, 12' wide at its top, and extended 6' below the level of the river; it contained 36,600 cubic feet of rock fill. Rough Point, 10 miles below Silverton, required a deep cut into the canyon wall to avoid crossing the river. Big Point, probably opposite Ruby Creek 13 miles below Silverton, had a 500'-long rock fill that was 12' wide at its base, 10' wide at its top, and extended 13' above the river. Island Point, just south of an island in the river about ¼ mile above Crazy Woman Creek, had a 170'-long fill and a short, but deep cut (Nossaman 1993:87). One of the fills, perhaps the longest at Big Point, was described by Lt. M'Cauley in 1877 as being 441' long, 14-16' wide at the bottom, 10' wide at the top with the an average depth of fill being 5'-9". The greatest depth of fill was 11'-9" and the

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greatest depth of water through which it passed was 6'-2". The fill cost \$1.72 per linear foot to construct, so the 441'-long fill cost nearly \$760 in 1876, which would be the equivalent of nearly \$16,000 today.<sup>1</sup> In some places where no bench along the river existed and it was not possible to build a fill, blasting of a notch on the cliff side was necessary and a retaining wall was built below to retain the roadbed. The retaining walls were 20-30' tall in some places. The rock was extremely hard, and it took 30 drill steels per foot of roadbed. Blasting reportedly cost \$7.92 per cubic yard, or the equivalent of \$165 per cubic yard today (M'Cauley 1878:1799-1800). When Cascade Creek was reached, it was spanned by a wood-framed bridge supported by cribbing of similar construction to the others. The road then climbed out of the Animas River Canyon on a steep, winding grade that required stone retaining walls to hold the roadbed on the steep side slope. Upon reaching the summit of Cascade Hill, the road crossed Little Cascade Creek and followed Elbert Creek through present Electra Lake and southward past Rockwood to Baker's Bridge where the lower toll house may have been situated (Nossaman 1993:87-88).

The Animas Cañón Toll Road Company reportedly spent \$23,000 of its \$30,000 in capital constructing the toll road (Nossaman 1993:88); this would be the equivalent of about \$480,000 today. In 1879, there were numerous fires in the region, including the Lime Creek Burn that resulted in several bridges being destroyed. Additionally, erosion related to the fires caused damage to the road bed. In all, repairs cost \$1,500 to \$2,000 (Nossaman 1993:258, 260) or the equivalent of \$35,000 to \$47,500 today.

No historic maps of the entire route of the toll road are known to exist. The General Land Office surveyed the townships that included the road through the canyon in 1881 and 1882. The map of the northern portion inexplicably does not show the road. The map that shows most of the middle section of the route in the canyon is incredibly inaccurate and appears that it was drawn without the surveyor actually having been in the field. The southernmost map of the route in the canyon shows the road and the railroad, but is also inaccurate, with detail being off by about one mile. No information has been found regarding toll charges and the number of users. Historical information indicates that the toll road was used year around, but not always with wagons. When heavy snows prevented traditional travel by wagons, sleds were used. During particularly heavy snows, mail and small amounts of freight were conveyed with sleds pulled by dogs. Although the historical record does not often mention specifically what was freighted on the road, it can be surmised that everything needed for the growth and prosperity of the burgeoning town of Silverton and the mines throughout the region were brought in using the toll road. This would have included food, animal feed, merchandise to be sold in stores, personal household goods, coal, and all sorts of equipment for mining, milling, sawmills, or other businesses that sprang up. Outbound traffic would have been comprised mainly of raw or processed ore.

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<sup>1</sup> calculations made using an inflation calculator available at [www.westegg.com/inflation/infl.cgi](http://www.westegg.com/inflation/infl.cgi) (accessed August 30, 2013)

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## Way Stations

The earliest and most reliable stop along the route was at the top of Cascade Hill where Samuel Smith had built a corral and cabin in 1874. With the construction of the toll road, his homestead became a way station where teams were changed, horses were rested, travelers were fed, and overnight lodging was offered. More corrals, barns, and cabins were added to satisfy the need (Nossaman 1993:88-89; 2006:217). Theodore Schoch began leasing Smith's accommodations in March 1880 and renamed the way station the Cascade House. Schoch had arrived in Baker's Park in 1872 after initially mining in the Summitville Mining District. He began a packing business in 1873 and established the Grand Central Livery in Silverton in 1875. When Fred Steineger took over the Grand Central Livery in 1880, Schoch moved to Cascade Hill. The Cascade Post Office was established on June 14, 1880 with Theodore Schoch as postmaster. With Schoch involved in running the Cascade House, D. J. Shaw made it his headquarters for packing supplies to Rico, a town approximately 83 miles northwest of Durango. Prior to packing to Rico, Shaw had operated a forwarding business at Grassy Hill on the trail over Cunningham Pass in 1878 and 1879 (Nossaman 1993:236, 238, 281) Bauer 2004a:13-14). The next year, Dawson & Porter were packing supplies to Rico weekly from the Cascade House and the Rico House. In 1882, Shaw moved his business to the Red Mountain District. (Dolores News, June 19, 1880:3, July 10, 1880:3, February 19, 1881:3; Nossaman 1998:270, 279). The Cascade Post Office at the former Cascade House was discontinued on April 22, 1881 when Schoch departed for Needleton and was reestablished on May 11, 1881 at the former location of Niccora with John L. Haines as postmaster (Bauer 2004a:13-14; Nossaman 1993:27, 295, 311; 2006:107, 116). Niccora had been established as a post office on July 16, 1877 for crews working on the toll road with Frank E. Blackledge as postmaster. It was situated at the base of Cascade Hill and was discontinued on November 26, 1877 when Blackledge left for Del Norte, never to return to the canyon (Bauer 2004b:65; Nossaman 1993:89-90). The reopened Cascade Post Office closed on July 24, 1882, when Haines moved to Ophir (Bauer 2004a:13-14; Nossaman 1993:295). Neither of these locations retain features or integrity as they were obliterated by the construction of the dam for Electra Lake that serves the Tacoma Hydroelectric Power Plant.

Another important stop along the toll road in the canyon was Ten Mile House, which became another way station like the Cascade House. Minnie and Franz Armine Schneider moved into the canyon from Silverton in 1880 and settled in Animas Canyon 10 miles south of town where Ten Mile Creek entered the river. Their large hotel was the first horse-changing station for freighters leaving Silverton. Schneider was well known for using dogsleds to deliver mail between Silverton and Animas City when snow prevented the use of wagons and horses. Completion of the railroad along the route in 1882 made the station obsolete (Nossaman 1993:293; 1998:176-177). No remnants of the station were observed during the 2013 survey (Satterwhite and Horn 2013: 20).

Of lesser importance was a hotel at Elk Park that was started by David C. Hershie in 1880 where he also operated a dairy in 1881. In October 1881, Hershie leased the hotel to James W. Mason, who had been working for Theodore Schoch at Needleton (Nossaman 1993:294; 1998:57). A



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similar establishment was the Bowen Ranch of William Bowen two miles north of Cascade Creek (Nossaman 1993:29).

## **Railroad Development**

From the beginning, Wightman anticipated that the toll road would be the forerunner of a railroad to Silverton. To that end, the Baker's Park & Lower Animas Railroad Company was incorporated on October 11, 1878. The stated purpose of the company was to construct a railroad from Silverton to Junction Creek south of Animas City. Wightman was the company president and the other incorporators were Adair Wilson, a Del Norte attorney; John G. Taylor, a Silverton attorney; Dempsey Reese; and Thomas Graden. Soon thereafter, George D. Nickel completed a survey of the railroad route that included entrance into the Animas River Canyon at Rockwood from where a route blasted from the canyon side would extend to Cascade Creek in order to bypass the steep drop of Cascade Hill (Nossaman 1993:109). Optimism that the toll road would be the route of a railroad was expressed in 1876, even before the road was completed, when it was reported that the route was recognized as being the most feasible for a railroad, which will be built "at an early day" (*Colorado Springs Gazette*, November 25, 1876:2). Companies with plans to construct a railroad to Silverton began emerging the next year, beginning with the incorporation of the San Juan Railway Company in July 1877. It proposed a route through Del Norte and up the Rio Grande before crossing the divide to Lake City and Gunnison on its way to Salt Lake City, Utah. The line was to have a branch to Animas Forks, Eureka, and the Animas Valley (Nossaman 1993:109). The Animas Valley Railroad Company was incorporated in November 1877 and proposed to build a line from the northern end of the lower Animas River Valley to Silverton with branches up Mineral Creek, Cement Creek, and Cunningham Gulch. Otto Mears would later build the Silverton Railroad up Mineral Creek in 1889; the Silverton, Gladstone & Northerly up Cement Creek in 1896, and the Silverton Northern up the Upper Animas in 1899 and 1904 (Crum, 1960: vii, 25, 29). Wightman's 1878 incorporation of the Baker's Park & Lower Animas Railroad Company reserved the route of the Animas Cañón Toll Road as a potential railroad route, a right that he capitalized upon when he sold the route to the D&RG late the following year (Nossaman 1993:109-110).

Upon completion of the toll road in 1878, Wightman moved to Rockwood and lived in the household of his daughter and her husband, George Warner. Warner became the first postmaster at Rockwood on July 8, 1878, but continued to serve as the Secretary of the Animas Cañón Toll Road Company. In 1879, Wightman and Warner replaced bridges burned by forest fires and improved a section of the road just south of Silverton, which was considered the worst part of the road. Although no record of the transaction was filed, Wightman sold the toll road to the D&RG in late 1879 or early 1880 and purchased a 40-acre ranch one mile north of Santa Ana, California. In 1888, he moved into town and retired from active business life (Bauer 2004b:73-75; Lewis Publishing Company 1890:891-892). Wightman died December 20, 1891 in Santa Ana after reportedly being gored by a bull (*Silverton Standard*, October 28, 1905:5).

The growth of Rico stimulated road building in that direction, including a route known as the Rico Road constructed in 1880 and 1881 off of the Animas Cañón Toll Road. Warner began

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operating the Rico House at the junction of the two roads just north of Rockwood beginning in 1880 and probably moved the Rockwood Post Office with him. Warner ceased to be the Rockwood postmaster on June 4, 1881 and also moved his family to Santa Ana (Bauer 2004b:73-75; Nossaman 1993:109, 235-236, 280; 1998:155).

The intentions of the D&RG to build to Santa Fe were derailed by competition from the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad in 1878. Instead, the D&RG extended their line westward over La Veta Pass and established a new end-of-the-line shipping point at Alamosa. The rich mines of Silverton became their new destination. From Alamosa, a decision was made to continue southward to Antonito before heading west through Pagosa Springs to Animas City and then up the Animas River to Silverton, rather than opting for a route through Del Norte and up the Rio Grande River. Construction in 1880 and 1881 reached the lower Animas Valley and the new town of Durango on July 27, 1881. The establishment of the D&RG's town of Durango quashed further development of the fledgling and adjacent Animas City (Fraser and Strand 1997:29-33; Nossaman 1998:144-147).

Anticipating construction to Silverton, the D&RG bought the Animas Cañón Toll Road in late 1879 or early 1880, though no deeds for the transaction are known to exist (Nossaman 1993:295). After completing the route to Durango, work crews were diverted to the Gunnison Valley for a time, allowing Durango to develop as the key town at the end of the line (Nossaman 1998:149). Surveying of the route between Durango and Silverton began in 1879 and was completed in early 1880. Realizing that it would not be possible to build a railroad down Cascade Hill to the Animas River along the route of the Animas Cañón Toll Road, the company decided to enter the Animas Canyon at Rockwood, thereby diverging from the toll road route for several miles. Rockwood originated as a construction camp for the railroad where blasting of the route from the cliff face began (Nossaman 1993:110; 1998:154). Grading of the route began in April 1881, and a sawmill was set up to cut railroad ties in the canyon two miles below Silverton at the mouth of Deer Park Creek by Thomas C. Graden, one of the trustees of the toll road company and the Baker's Park & Lower Animas Railroad Co., and Robert E. Sloan (Nossaman 1998:158-159). Although track was laid to a point just beyond Rockwood in 1881, the railroad did not arrive in Silverton until early July 1882, but too late for a July 4 celebration expected to commemorate its arrival (Nossaman 1998:169, 184).

### **End of the Wagon Road**

The establishment of the railroad through the canyon eliminated the need for way stations along the route. The only permanent settlement that remained was at Needleton at the opening of Needle Creek at the D&SNG railroad stop, where Theodore Schoch had moved after he left the Cascade House in 1881. Considerable mining and prospecting took place in the nearby Needle Mountains and Needleton was the point of supply for the mines and a water stop for the D&SNG. The Needleton Post Office was established on May 26, 1882 on the western side of the Animas River 1/4 miles south of Needle Creek along the D&RG. Theodore Schoch was the first postmaster, and his wife, Susette, took over the position in 1886. When Susette Schoch committed suicide at Needleton in January 1889 (Silver Cliff Rustler, January 17, 1889:2), the

Animas Cañón Toll Road

Name of Property

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position was filled by Warren N. Taylor on May 29, 1889. After a succession of postmasters, the post office was closed on January 31, 1910 (Bauer 2004b:63-64).

On January 4, 1883, the section of the wagon road between Rockwood through George B. Warner's Ranch, where the Rico House had been situated, and northward was declared abandoned by the county (La Plata County Commissioner's Record Book No. 2:180). This was probably a necessary mechanism so that usable portions of the road north of Rockwood through what is now Electra Lake could be converted to a county road. Thereafter, the route became known as the Rockwood-Silverton Road. Branching off of the road at the Warner Ranch/Rico House was the Rockwood-Rico Road (La Plata County Courthouse, County Clerk's Office, Deed Book 59, Pages 391-392 and Plat Book 2, Page 30). On January 29, 1896, the La Plata County Commissioners received a road petition for a road to Needleton that followed what was referred to as the Old Silverton Toll Road to Cascade. The route was examined by road viewers on March 27, 1896 and approved as a county road by the County Commissioners on April 14, 1896 (La Plata County Courthouse, County Clerk's Office, Road Viewers Report, March 30, 1896). Although it is unclear where the county road began, it is clear that it included the route of the Animas Cañón Toll Road down Cascade Hill to the Animas River. The route crossed the river near the railroad wye at Cascade Creek and followed the eastern side of the river nearly to Needle Creek where it crossed back to the western side of the river and ended at Needleton. Its route from Cascade to Needleton was on the opposite side of the river from the Animas Cañón Toll Road and the railroad.

In 1904, Electra Lake began to be constructed as the water storage reservoir for the Tacoma Power Plant. As the water in the lake rose, a nearly 3-mile-long section of the old Animas Cañón Toll Road was inundated.

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Name of Property

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Animas Cañón Toll Road  
 Name of Property

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

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

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other
- Name of repository: United States Forest Service Columbine District Office

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** SJNF 2013-58

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreege of Property** 4.88

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

Segment Number	Beginning UTM	Ending UTM
5LP.1258.03	252007mE 4158525mN	254675mE 4164675mN
5LP.1258.08	252097mE 4157711mN	255775mE 4165170mN
5LP.1258.09a	253179mE 4164086mN	251948mE 4158016mN
5LP.1258.09b	254491mE 4164429mN	252198mE 4156350mN
5LP.1258.10	254652mE 4164650mN	254419mE 414321mN
5LP.1258.11	255391mE 4165098mN	254516mE 4164442mN
5SA.1466.01	263428mE 4171094mN	263489mE 4171214mN
5SA.1466.02	263600mE 4171920mN	266118mE 4177452mN
5SA.1466.03	263677mE 4172125mN	266112mE 4178742mN



**Animas Cañón Toll Road**

La Plata and San Juan, CO

Name of Property	County and State	
5SA.1466.04	264650mE 4173521mN	263615mE 4171964mN
5SA.1466.05	265217mE 4173775mN	263720mE 4172152mN
5SA.1466.06	265429mE 4173944mN	264707mE 4173533mN
5SA.1466.07	265694mE 4174418mN	265286mE 4173836mN
5SA.1466.08	265577mE 4175945mN	265593mE 4174103mN
5SA.1466.09	265622mE 4176394mN	265679mE 4174858mN
5SA.1466.10	266090mE 4177398mN	265581mE 4176089mN
5SA.1466.11	266218mE 4178625mN	265629mE 4176428mN

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The property boundary includes the extant portions of the wagon road. This is generally a 10' wide corridor where there is evidence for the wagon road on San Juan Forest Service lands.

Segment Number	Approximate Distance to next segment North	Measurements
5LP.1258.08	1,090'	4950' x 10'
5LP.1258.03	17,640'	1800' x 10'
5LP.1258.09a	18,300'	7,140' x 10'
5LP.1258.09b	447'	100' x 10'
5LP.1258.10	989'	118' x 7-10'
5LP.1258.11	2,370'	946' x 7-10'
5SA.1466.01	32,311'	144' x 10-12'
5SA.1466.02	506'	473' x 9'
5SA.1466.03	5,086'	168' x 10'
5SA.1466.04	1,600'	199' x 8-10'
5SA.1466.05	434'	313' x 8'
5SA.1466.06	958'	763' x 10-12'
5SA.1466.07	3,300'	1,475' x 10'
5SA.1466.08	781'	515' x 8'
5SA.1466.09	3,100'	140' x 6-8'
5SA.1466.10	3,500'	199' x 6'
5SA.1466.11		156' x 10'

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The nominated segments encompass all portions of the road on Forest Service lands that contribute to the eligibility of the road as a whole.

Animas Cañón Toll Road  
Name of Property

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### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Lynn Robinson/ Archaeologist and Julie Coleman/Archaeologist  
organization: U.S. Forest Service San Juan National Forest  
street & number: 367 Pearl St., PO Box 439  
city or town: Bayfield state: CO zip code: 81122  
e-mail lynnirobinson@fs.fed.us  
telephone: 970-884-1439  
date: 1/23/2017

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### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

### Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Animas Cañón Toll Road  
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## NR Nomination Photograph Log Page

The following information pertains to photographs numbers 1 – 5 and 10-15

Name of Property: Animas Cañón Toll Road

Location: La Plata and San Juan County

Photographer: RD Satterwhite

Date of Photographs: 10/17-10/22/2012

Location of Original Files: Columbine District Office 367 Pearl St, Bayfield, CO 81122

TIFs on file with NPS

Date	Photo Number	View	Description
10/17	1	N	5LP.1258.9: Overview at point where curves away from Little Cascade Creek
10/18	2	S	5LP.1258.10: Overview of section N slope
10/18	3	S	5LP.1258.10: Overview of section S slope
10/20	4	N	5SA.1466.2: Overview of trail segment
10/22	5	N	5SA.1466.7: Overview of trail segment
10/20	10	NE	5SA.1466.5: Segment at 10 Mile Creek
10/22	11	NE	5SA.1466.6: Overview of trail segment
10/22	12	S	5SA.1466.8: Overview of trail segment
10/22	13	E	5SA.1466.9: Overview of trail segment
10/22	14	N	5SA.1466.10: Overview of trail segment
10/22	15	N	5SA.1466.11: Overview of trail segment

The following information pertains to photographs numbers 6-9 and 16-18

Name of Property: Animas Cañón Toll Road

Location: La Plata and San Juan County

Photographer: Sean Doyle

Date of Photographs: 9/2-9/3/2012

Location of Original Files: Columbine District Office 367 Pearl St, Bayfield, CO 81122

TIFs on file with NPS

Date	Photo Number	View	Description
9/2	6	NE	5LP.1258.11: Engineered shelf
9/2	7	E	5LP.1258.11: Overview of road near outcrop
9/2	8	SW	5LP.1258.11: Looking down cut and fill grade with railroad on bench below
9/2	9	NE	5LP.1258.11: Uphill grade on a ridge nose
9/3	16	W	5SA.1466.3: Alignment overview
9/3	17	E	5SA.1466.4: Overview of segment at interface with the Railroad
9/3	18	SW	5SA.1466.1: Overview of segment

Animas Cañón Toll Road  
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The following information pertains to photographs numbers 19-20

Name of Property: Animas Cañón Toll Road

Location: La Plata County

Photographer: Lynn Robinson

Date of Photographs: 9/24/2014

Location of Original Files: Columbine District Office 367 Pearl St, Bayfield, CO 81122

TIFs on file with NPS

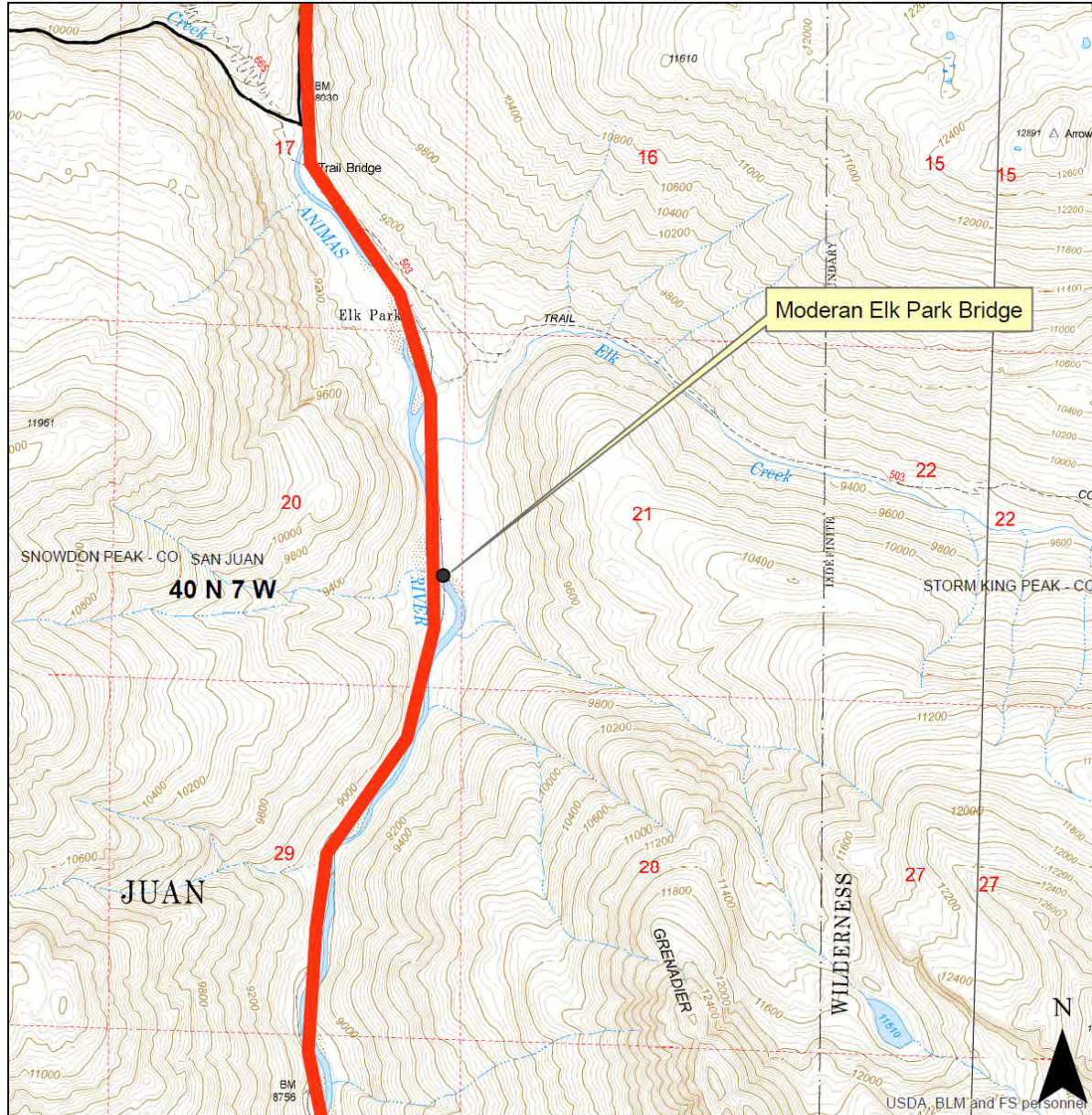
Date	Photo Number	View	Description
9/24	19	N	5LP.1258.8: Overview of segment
9/24	20	N	5LP.1258.3: Overview of segment

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).


**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

**Animas Cañon Toll Road**  
Name of Property

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**Legend**

 Approximate Original Route

**Modern Elk Park Bridge Location Map**

PM: New Mexico

1:24,000

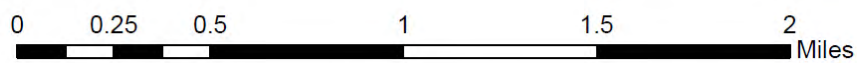
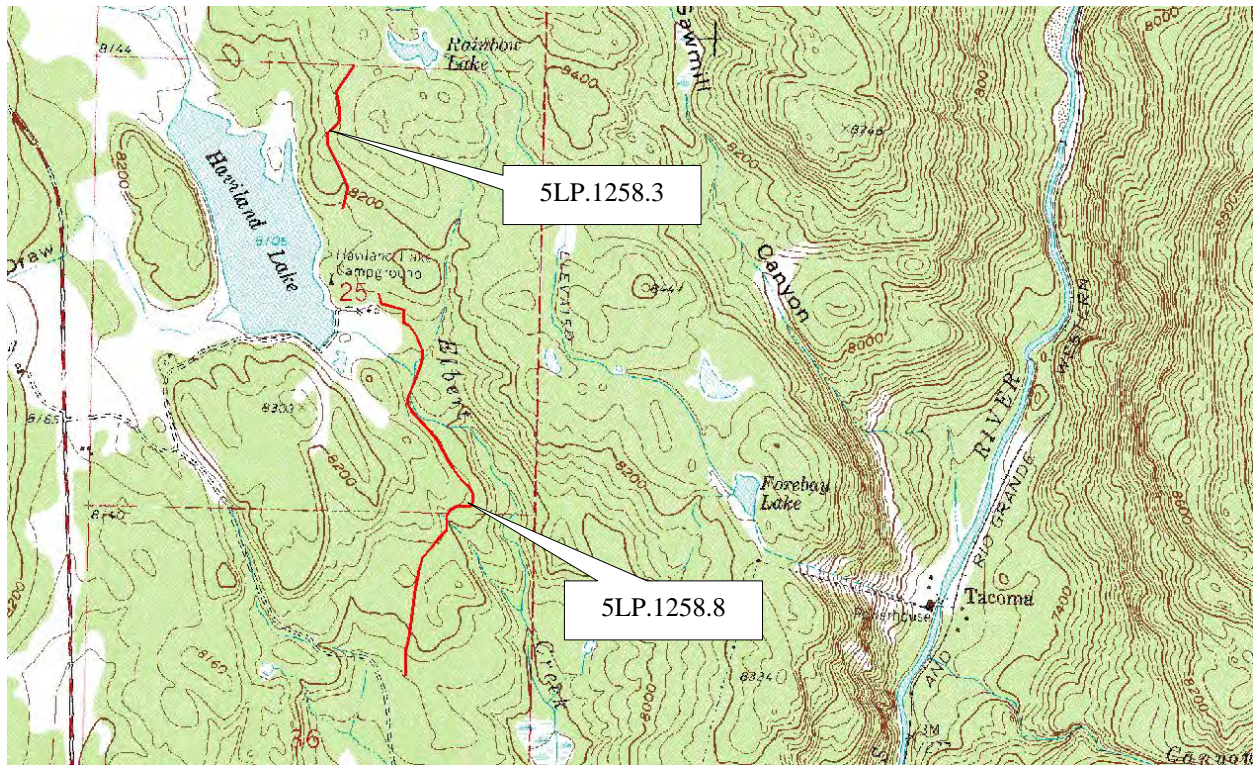


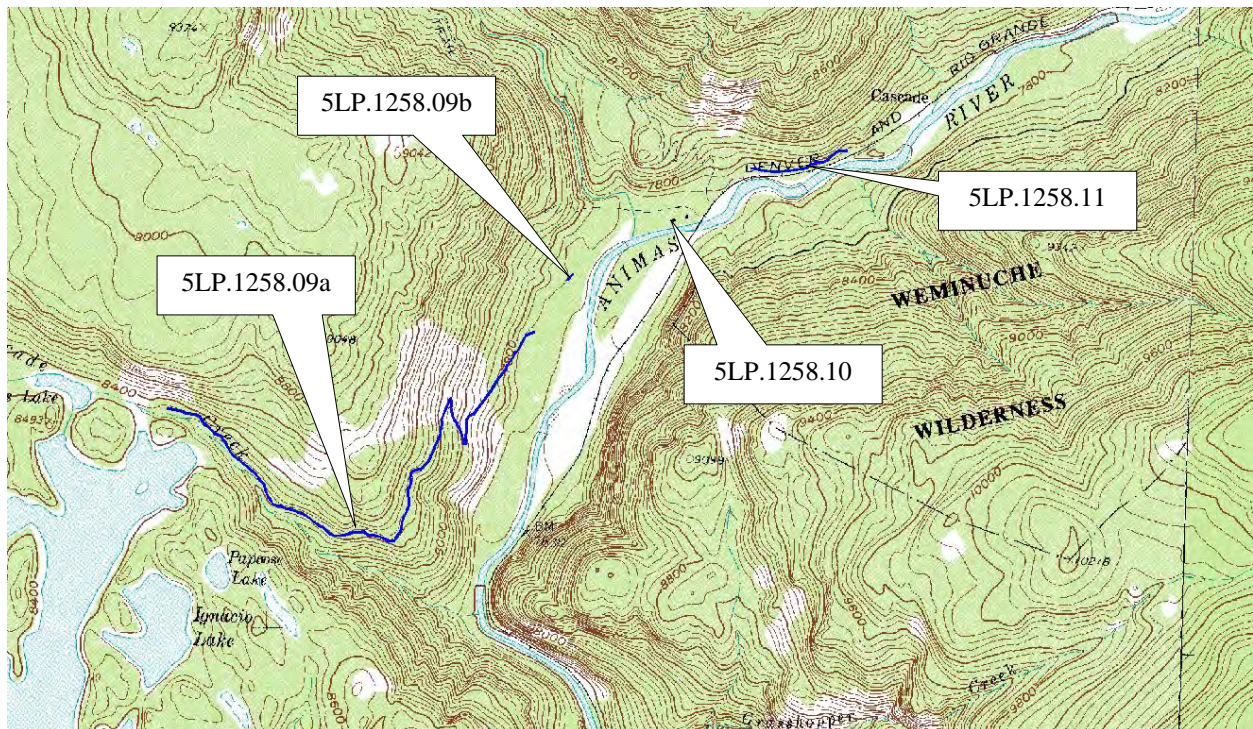
Figure 3

Animas Cañon Toll Road  
Name of Property

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County and State



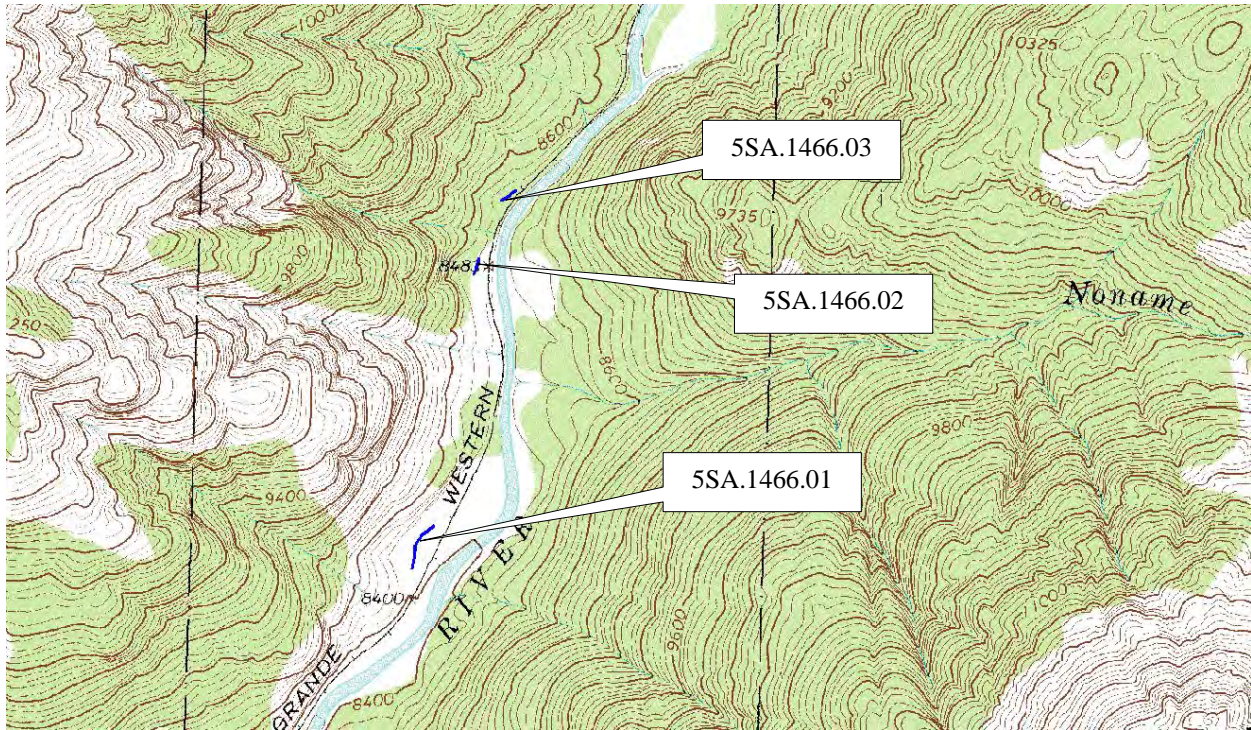
Map 1: USGS Quad Map – Electra Lake Quad CO, 7.5 min series



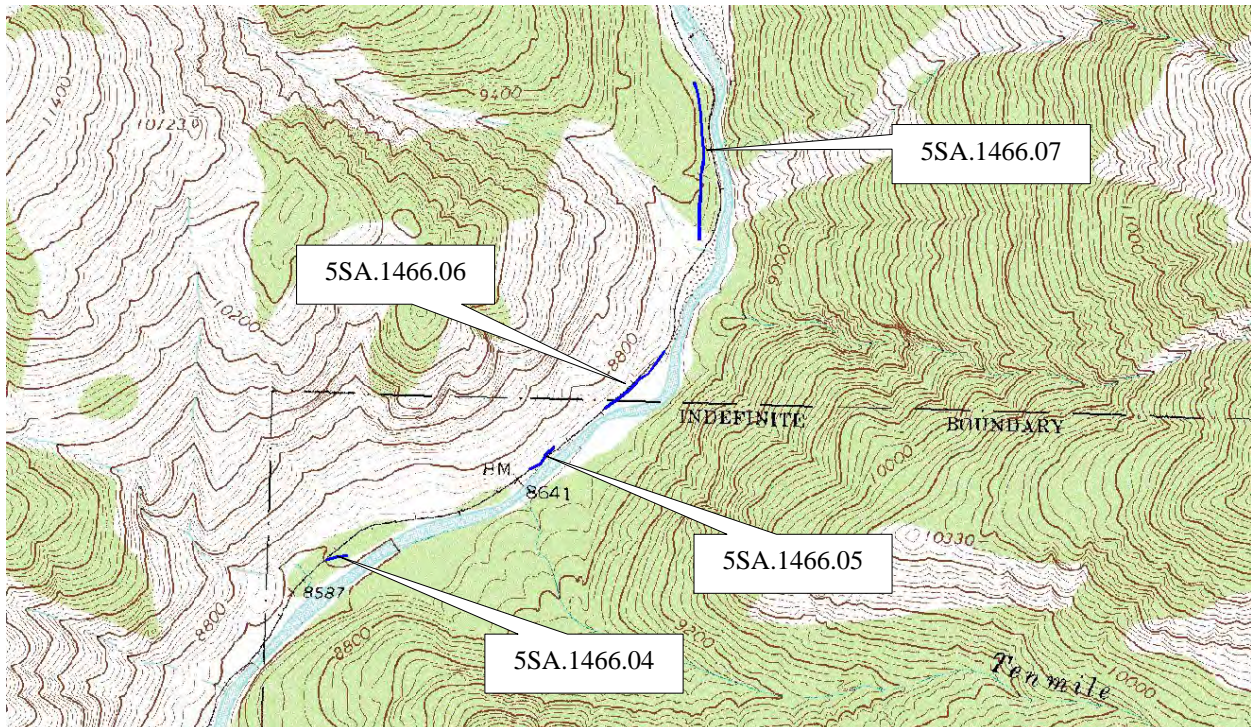
Map 2: USGS Quad Map – Electra Lake Quad CO, 7.5 min series

Animas Cañon Toll Road  
Name of Property

La Plata and San Juan, CO  
County and State



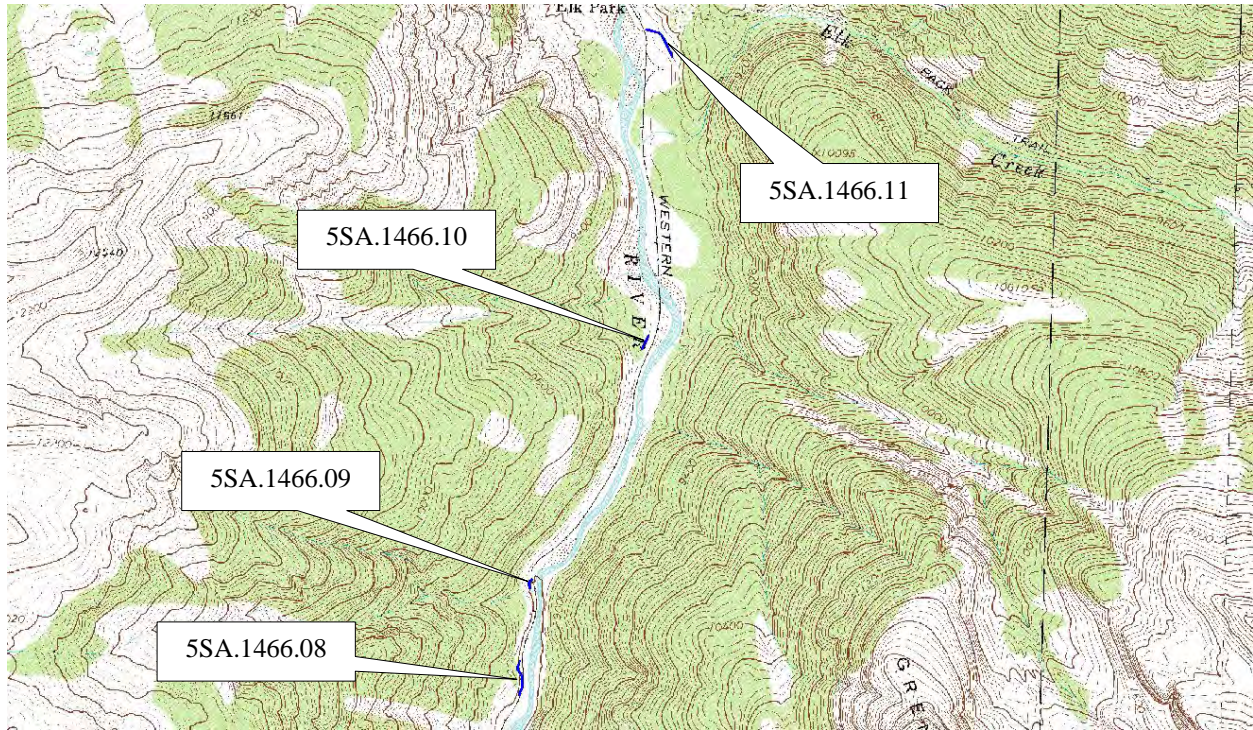
Map 3: USGS Quad Map – Snowden Peak Quad CO, 7.5 min series



Map 4: USGS Quad Map – Snowden Peak Quad CO, 7.5 min series

Animas Cañon Toll Road  
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County and State



Map 5: USGS Quad Map – Snowden Peak Quad CO, 7.5 min series







9225

9047

CANYON  
AND  
RED BRIDGE  
RIVER

ANIMAS

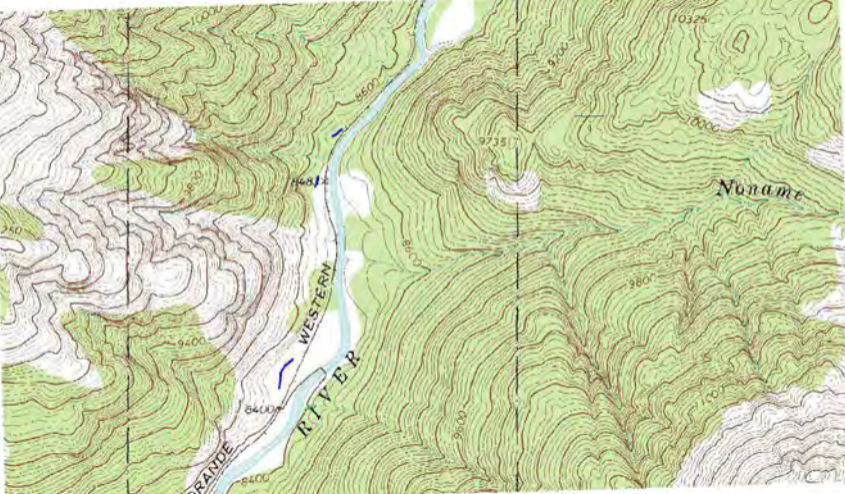
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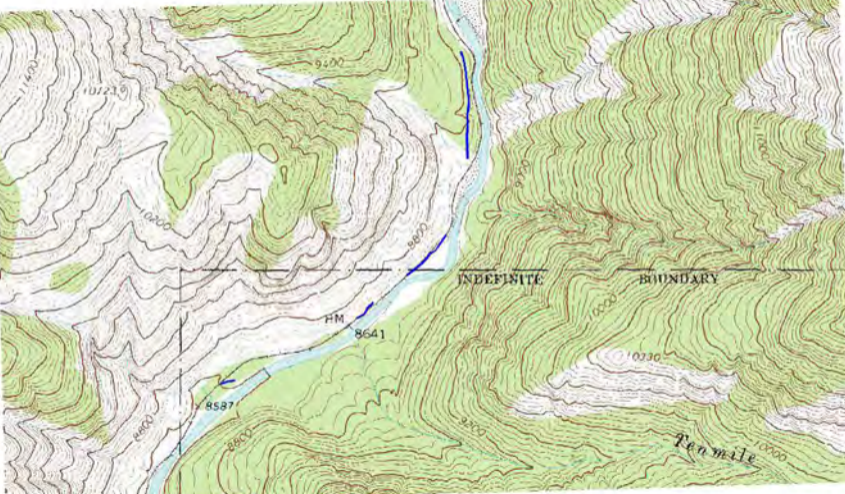
WILDERNESS

Pope  
Lake

Ignacio  
Lake

Cottonwood  
Lake





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9400

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8800

INDEFINITE BOUNDARY

HM

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10000

10330

8587

8800

8800

9200

Ten mile

10000



2 Elk Park

WESTERN  
RIVER

12867

10600

10628

Trail  
Creek

10600

GREY















































UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received:  Date of Pending List:  Date of 16th Day:  Date of 45th Day:  Date of Weekly List:

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

- |                                       |  |   |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal       | <input type="checkbox"/> PDIL            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape       | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver       | <input type="checkbox"/> National        | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other        | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP             | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years         |
|                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> CLG             |   |

Accept     Return     Reject    3/27/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary  
Comments:

Recommendation/  
Criteria

Reviewer Edson Beall Discipline Historian

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



# HISTORY *Colorado*

January 26, 2017

Mr. J. Paul Loether  
Deputy Keeper and Chief, NR and NHL Programs  
National Register of Historic Places  
1201 Eye Street, NW, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor (MS 2280)  
Washington, D.C. 20005-5905

Dear Mr. Loether:

We are pleased to write in support of the National Register of Historic Places nomination for the Animas Cañon Toll Road (5LP.1258/5SA.1466) in La Plata and San Juan counties, Colorado. The State Historic Preservation Office has reviewed the nomination and finds that the property meets the criteria for listing in the National Register.

We look forward to the formal listing of this property. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Erika Warzel, National and State Register Historian, by phone at 303-866-4683 or by email at [erika.warzel@state.co.us](mailto:erika.warzel@state.co.us).

Sincerely,

Holly K. Norton, Ph.D.  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

File Code: 2360  
Date: FEB 06 2017

Dr. Stephanie Toothman  
Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places  
1201 Eye Street, NW (2280)  
Washington , DC 20005



Dear Dr. Toothman:

Please find enclosed a nomination for the Animas Cañón Toll Road on the San Juan National Forest. The nomination was prepared by San Juan National Forest Heritage staff and has been reviewed and approved by the Colorado State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Not only does listing of the Animas Cañón Toll Road to the National Register provide recognition of the importance of this significant resource, it also fulfills agency commitments put forth in a Memorandum of Agreement between the Colorado SHPO and San Juan National Forest regarding the Hermosa/Mitchell Lakes land Exchange.

The enclosed disks contain the true and correct copies of the nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

It is our pleasure to submit this nomination with our approval and endorsement. If you require anything further from us, please do not hesitate to contact Jason Robertson, Deputy Director, Recreation, Lands and Minerals at (303)275-5470 or [jasondrobertson@fs.fed.us](mailto:jasondrobertson@fs.fed.us).

Sincerely,

*Brian Ferebee*

BRIAN FEREBEE  
Regional Forester

Enclosures: 2 CDs and nomination hardcopy

cc: Molly Westby, Julie Coleman, Lynn Robinson

