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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

DEC 23

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Medano Ranch Headquarters

other name/site number Medano Springs Land and Cattle Company/5AL301

2. Location

street & number Unnamed road, 3.6 miles north of 6N Lane N/A not for publication

city or town Mosca vicinity

state Colorado code CO county Alamosa code 003 zip code 81146

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

Robertina Catleguila 12/10/03
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

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

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 - See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 - See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Edson H. Beall 2/4/04
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property
(check only one box)

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
6	3	buildings
1	0	sites
3	1	structures
0	0	objects
10	4	Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Function
(Enter categories from instructions)

- AGRICULTURE/animal facility
- AGRICULTURE/agricultural outbuilding
- AGRICULTURE/storage
- DOMESTIC/single family
- DOMESTIC/institutional housing

Current Function
(Enter categories from instructions)

- VACANT/NOT IN USE
- AGRICULTURE/storage

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

- OTHER/log cabin

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

- foundation CONCRETE
- walls WOOD/log
- roof METAL
- other BRICK

Narrative Description

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

8. Description

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Areas of Significance

(enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURE _____

ARCHITECTURE _____

Period of Significance

1877-1947 _____

Significant Date

1877 _____

1912 _____

1947 _____

Significant Persons

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A _____

Cultural Affiliation

N/A _____

Architect/Builder

N/A _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other Name of repository:

The Nature Conservancy archives _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 10.1 acres

UTM References

(Place additional boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

A 1/3 4/3/9/8/2/0 4/1/7/4/2/8/0
Zone Easting Northing

B 1/3 4/4/0/0/3/0 4/1/7/4/2/8/0
Zone Easting Northing

C 1/3 4/3/9/9/6/0 4/1/7/4/0/1/5
Zone Easting Northing

D 1/3 4/3/9/7/4/0 4/1/7/4/0/1/5
Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title R. Laurie Simmons and Thomas H. Simmons, historians

organization Front Range Research Associates, Inc. date 29 August 2003 (revised)

street & number 3635 West 46th Avenue telephone 303-477-7597

city or town Denver state CO zip code 80211

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

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

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

Property Owner

name/title The Nature Conservancy

street & number 5303 Colo. Hwy. 150 telephone 719-378-2356

city or town Mosca state CO zip code 81146

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

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 7 Page 1

Medano Ranch Headquarters, Alamosa County, CO

Narrative Description

Setting and Layout of the Headquarters Site

The Medano Ranch headquarters served as an integral part of a major cattle ranching operation from 1877 to 1947 and consisted of the diverse resource types necessary to fulfill that role. The complex is located on the floor of the San Luis Valley in rural Alamosa County, Colorado, at an elevation of 7,549 feet, on land that slopes gently from northeast to southwest. Big Spring Creek flows north of the site while Little Spring Creek runs south of the site. San Luis Lake lies about three miles to the southwest and Head Lake is about three miles west. The Great Sand Dunes National Monument boundary is located four miles east of the headquarters, with the towering peaks of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains dominating the vista further east (Photograph1). The historic Zapata Ranch, listed in the National Register, lies to the southeast.

The ranch headquarters complex consists of a main ranch house to the north and buildings located along the edges of the open ranch yard roughly forming a square. Housing and support facilities for ranch workers are located at the east end of the square, while animal and storage facilities are located on the west and south. A large, complex corral system lies south of the buildings.

Descriptions of Individual Resources

A table listing the contributing status of all resources appears at the end of this section. A Sketch Map of the headquarters area is included on page 30. Dates of construction were estimated from historic photographs, information provided by J. Robert "Bob" Linger (whose family owned the ranch from 1912 to 1947), and historic maps and documents.¹ As early owners consolidated smaller holdings into an extensive ranch, it is likely that several of the resources were moved to the headquarters site from other locations. The physical appearance of some of the buildings supports this conclusion, and Bob Linger states that his family had always heard that this was the case. However, the moving in of buildings from other sites occurred before the start of the Linger era in 1912. Of the fourteen resources within the district, ten (71 percent) are evaluated as contributing and four (29 percent) noncontributing.

*Contributing Resources*²

Headquarters Site, site, c. 1877. The headquarters site of the Medano Ranch came into use as the heart of an extensive ranching operation in about 1877. Buildings and structures filling a variety of ranching functions were erected here or moved from other locations, which was a common ranching practice. The headquarters site was continuously used for ranching purposes from 1877, when a post office was assigned to the location, through the 1990s. The buildings north of the corral form a

¹ Dates for buildings have been conservatively estimated based on the availability of documentation. A building described as "pre-1930s" may well date to the 1870s or 1880s, yet no documentation exists to establish this.

² Some information used in the following descriptions comes from Mark M. Jones Associates, "Preliminary Field Assessment Medano Ranch Headquarters Complex," prepared for RMC Consultants, 6 May 2003.

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rough square (Photograph 2) and were once connected by a system of wood boardwalks (Photograph 3). Lines of trees delineate the northeast corner of the square where two buildings are no longer extant. Open grazing land lies to the west. The setting surrounding the headquarters site is unchanged.

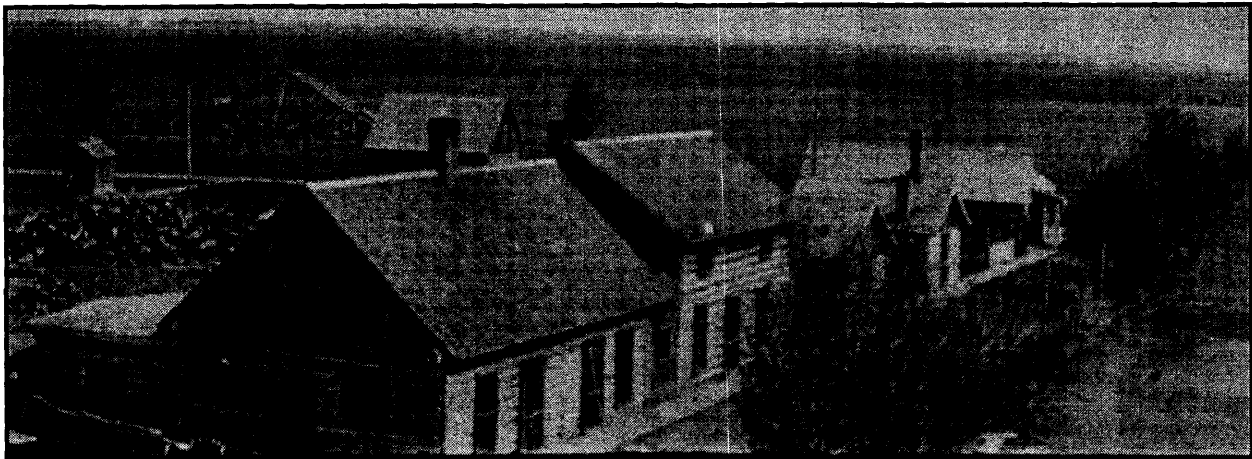


Figure 1. These views of the Medano headquarters area (c. 1920s) taken from the "watchtower" near the northeast corner of the corral shows the roughly square layout of the site; note boardwalk connecting the buildings to one another. Upper view (to north-northwest) shows bunkhouse, meat house, cook's house, and corner house (left to right), with the school/overflow bunkhouse and two push hay stackers in the background and an outhouse and woodpile at the center left. Lower view (to northwest) shows the harness shed, cottonseed cake shed, blacksmith shop, and the machine shed (right to left), with the main ranch house in the background and the woodpile and outhouse at center right. To form a complete panorama, the upper view would be joined to the right side of the lower view. SOURCE: Copyright, Linger Family Collection, Aurora, Colorado.

Main Ranch House (Resource 14), building, pre-1912 (with post-1947 additions), Photographs 4 and 5. The irregularly-shaped main ranch house consists on the west of three small one-story cabins joined together, with a newer log addition on the east that has one- and two-story components. Together, the components of the house represent the common practice of reusing materials and expanding buildings over time to meet new demands. The northernmost component of the older

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section of the house is composed of round logs with V-notches, as is the southernmost component (See Photograph 5). The center component is clad with vertical board siding and is stepped in slightly from the two end components. The cabins have concrete foundations and corrugated metal along the foundations.

The west wall of the older section of the house consists of three bays corresponding to the three joined cabins. The north bay has a central tripartite casement window. The center bay has paired three-light windows at the north end and an entrance with paneled door and metal screen flanked by nine-light windows. The south bay has two tall 2/2-light windows on the west wall. The upper wall of the two-story addition is visible on the west and has a six-light window at the north end, a vented gable, a metal pipe chimney and a metal antenna.

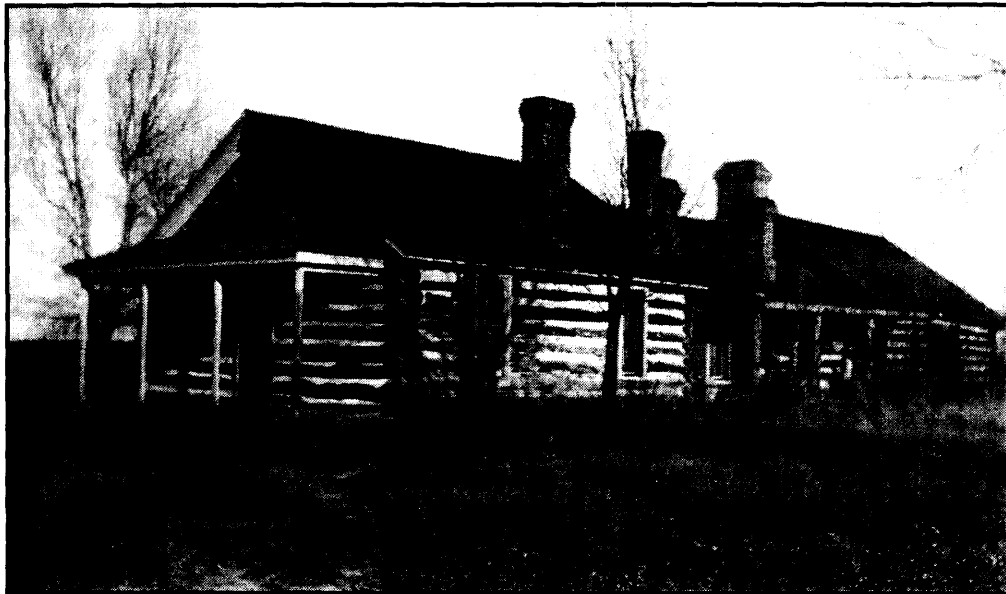


Figure 2. The main ranch house is shown in this undated historic view to the southeast. SOURCE: Copyright Linger Family Collection, Aurora, Colorado.

The south wall of the older part of the house has vertical board siding with decoratively cut ends on the gable face and two sets of deeply inset paired four-light windows (See Photograph 4). The east wall of the older section of the house has a tall, narrow, 2/2-light double-hung sash window at the south end and a two-light deeply inset window (shortened) at the north end. Northeast of this is a one-story log projection with a central entrance flanked by small two-light and plate glass windows. The projection has a flat roof and overhanging eaves with decoratively cut vertical boards creating frieze ornamentation. There is plywood on the wall east of the entrance. The logs of the one-story projection are unnotched. The east wall of this component has a large tripartite window. The south wall of the two-story section of the house has paired three-light windows and a gable above a paneled and glazed door.

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Medano Ranch Headquarters, Alamosa County, CO

The two-story section of the house north of this has a gabled roof with overhanging eaves and exposed rafters. The upper story has vertical board siding with decoratively cut ends. The first story walls are composed of round logs that are unnotched. The east wall of this section of the house has a vent at the apex of the gable face, paired three light casement windows at the south end of the upper story and center paired three-light windows. The lower story has a three-light window at the south end, two sets of paired casement windows, and a large boarded up opening.

The north wall of the two-story section of the building has paired three-light casement windows at each end of the upper story. The first story has a large tripartite window with plate glass flanked by four-light sidelights. The window has decorative vertical board shutters.

The one-story north wall of the older section of the house projects slightly outward beyond the addition. The gable face of the north wall is clad with vertical boards with decoratively cut ends. The gable end has two plate glass picture windows with one sidelight and a panel between the windows (the west sidelight is covered).

Bunkhouse/Kitchen (resource 10), building, pre-1912³, Photograph 6. The bunkhouse was in many respects the center of activity on the ranch. The building contained the kitchen, dining room, sleeping rooms, and relaxation space (e.g., listening to the radio, card games, reading) for workers at the ranch. Walt Stahlecker, who worked at the ranch from 1937 to 1942, remembered "a lot of good feelings about the bunkhouse and kitchen, three very good daily meals, and the comraderie [sic] experienced at the Medano Ranch."⁴

The bunkhouse also represents a classic case of combining and recycling buildings. The rectangular (58' 8" X 21') building consists of two components: a one-story section at the south end and a one-and-a-half-story section at the north end, with a connecting bay between the components. The building has a side gable roof with overhanging eaves and wood shingle roofing. The walls are composed of round daubed logs with V notches. There is a concrete foundation with corrugated metal along bottom of the wall.

The east wall of the one-story component has four openings covered with plywood. Adjacent to the one-story component is a center connecting bay with vertical boards and one rectangular window. The one-and-a-half-story component has two windows on the upper story (one broken out and one four-light). There are one center entrance (covered up) and two tall windows with board surrounds (covered). First-story joists are visible on the exterior of the wall.

The south wall has two small 1/1-light double-hung sash windows with plain board surrounds. There is a rectangular opening on the gable face. The north wall has a gable face clad with vertical boards. A tall, narrow, 4/4-light double-hung sash window on the gable face cuts through the cornice. The first story has a tall, narrow, 4/4-light double-hung sash window.

³ Horse hair reinforced plaster and log daubing suggest a construction date of 1900 or earlier for the building.

⁴ Walt Stahlecker, *Memories and Musings of an Old Cowpoke* (Kearney, Nebraska: Morris Publishing, 2000), 93-97.

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The west wall of the one-and-a-half-story component has a 4/4-light double-hung sash window at the center and a covered up entrance on the south end. The wall connecting the two sections of building has painted vertical board siding, with boards at the bottom of the wall sawed off and framing exposed. One horizontal two-light window is on the connecting section. Adjacent to this on the south is a log section with a tall 4/4-light double-hung sash window at the south end. South of this, the building steps out slightly and has flush horizontal board siding and two entrances (one with a partial paneled door) and a window between the entrances.

Cook's House (Resource 13), building, pre-1920s, Photograph 7. The cook's house is a small, one-story, rectangular (29' 4" X 13') log building consisting of two joined components (either built at separate periods or brought together from other locations). The building has a front gable roof with overhanging eaves and wood shingle roofing. There is a brick chimney with beveled concrete cap on the north roof slope. The west half of the building has walls composed of round logs with square corner notching and wide daubing. The east half of the building has square-hewn logs with half-dovetail notches and very wide daubing. The east gable face is clad with vertical paneling with three vertical battens. The east wall has a center entrance with a paneled and glazed door and wood screen door. The north wall has a horizontal slider window toward the east end. The west gable face is clad with narrow vertical boards with round ends. The west wall has a tall 4/4-light double-hung sash window. The south wall has a 6/6-light double-hung sash window in the center of the east half and a tall 4/4-light double-hung sash window in the center of the west half. The windows have plain wood surrounds.



Figure 3. Ranch hand Walt Stahlecker and a six-up team of horses in front of the harness shed (right) and cottonseed cake shed (left), during the 1937-42 period. SOURCE: Copyright Linger Family Collection, Aurora, Colorado.

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Harness Shed (Resource 9), building, pre-1930s (possibly early 1900s), Photographs 8 and 3. The harness shed is a simple one-story rectangular (26' 6" X 12' 4") frame building with a side gable roof with overhanging eaves and wood shingle roofing. The orange brick chimney on south roof slope has a corbelled top. The walls are clad with the traditional board and batten siding. The building has a concrete foundation on the east half and no foundation on the west end. Horizontal boards have been placed along the bottom of the walls. The south wall has two pedestrian entrances, with a paneled door at the east entrance. The north wall has two tall double-hung sash windows. The east and west walls have no openings. A portion of the ranch boardwalk remains along the exterior south of the building. The interior is divided into two sections, with a paneled door between the sections. The interior has wood strip flooring and vertical board walls with paper material covering the walls and ceiling. There is writing on the walls, including: "5-18-1909 Alamosa, Colorado, Garner" and "Samuel Samora 1906, San Luis, Colo.," which may be evidence of a date of construction of 1900s or earlier.

Draft Horse Barn (Resource 5), building, pre-1930s, Photograph 18. The draft horse barn is a one-story, square (28' X 28') log building with a shallow gable roof with slightly overhanging eaves, projecting purlins on east and west, wide fascia boards, and corrugated metal roofing. The building is composed of very large, mostly unhewn logs, which are the largest of any building on the site. The construction and style of the building appears to have been influenced by New Mexico traditions. The walls are composed of round logs with daubing, and the logs are saddle-notched. Corrugated metal has been placed along the foundation. A slightly off-center entrance on the south wall has a vertical board door with Z-bracing and strap hinges. There is a boarded up entrance at the center of the west wall, and a door on the east with strap hinges. On the interior, the roof displays slender poles (New Mexico style latias) that may have held the original alkali sod roof. This building once had an addition to the south (shown in 1930s photographs) that was removed after 1947.

Meat House (Resource 11), structure, pre-1920s, Photograph 9. The meat house is a one-story square (13' 6") log building with front gable roof with overhanging eaves and wood shingle roofing. A chimney pipe opening is on the south roof slope (chimney gone). The walls are composed of large, round, mostly unhewn logs with saddle notches and very wide daubing. The notched corners are painted brown. There is a paneled door on the east with a plain wood surround, and a center, boarded up opening on the west which once provided access to an ice storage feature (no longer present). The north and south walls have one four-light square window toward the west end. The interior of the building still stores a large amount of rock salt, which was used for curing meat.

Outhouse (Resource 6), building, pre-1941, Photograph 10. The outhouse is a small, simple, one-story, square (6' 4" X 6' 4") frame building with a front gable roof with overhanging eaves, exposed rafters, and wood shingle roofing. There is a wood vent on the roof ridge toward the rear. The walls are clad with drop siding with corner boards. The north wall has a center, paneled door with fixed-light window at the upper right of the door and a boarded up opening to upper left. There is a small window with a plain wood surround above the door. There are no openings on the south, east, or west. The interior walls have smooth tongue and groove paneling and the privy bench is "family style," with three holes (two adult and one child). This outhouse was originally located near the Cook's House; it was moved to its current location in the 1950s.

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Medano Ranch Headquarters, Alamosa County, CO

Cottonseed Cake House (Resource 18), structure, pre-1930s (possibly 1880s), Photograph 19. The cottonseed cake house is a one-story, rectangular (40' X 19') frame building with a side gable roof, overhanging eaves, and corrugated metal roofing. The walls are clad with board and batten siding and there is a deteriorated concrete foundation. There is a center entrance on the west with a vertical board door with strap hinges and one opening with the associated door lying in pieces on the ground. The east wall has an entrance near the center and a square window opening near south end. There are no openings on the north or south walls. The corral fence leans against the building on east. The interior of the building has writing on its west and south walls and north of the south door, including "John," "LARL," "EVERT," "HINER," "WOB," "1880," "WB(?)W," "CJS," and "1882." This structure was moved from its original location west of the Harness Shop in the 1990s.

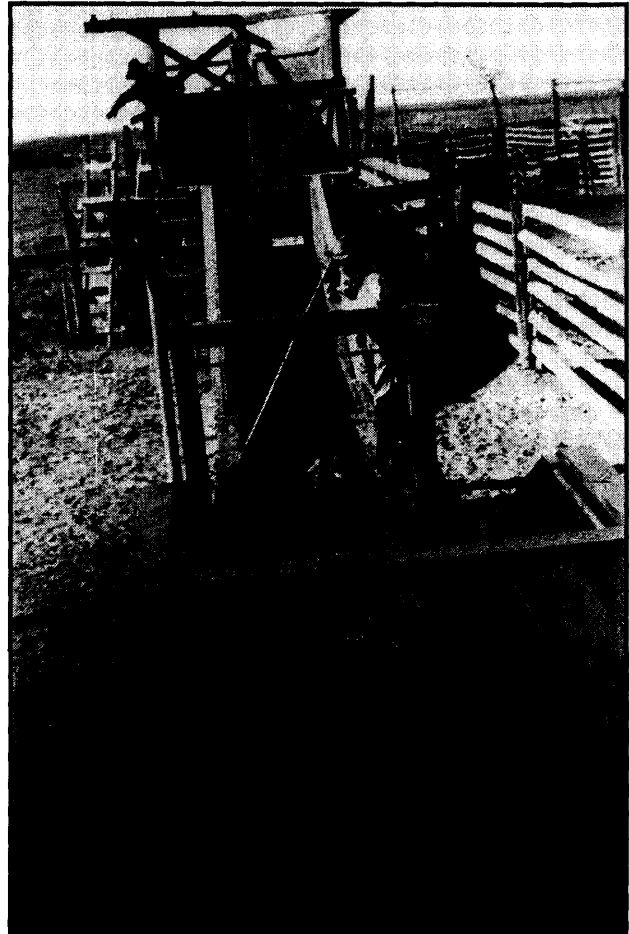
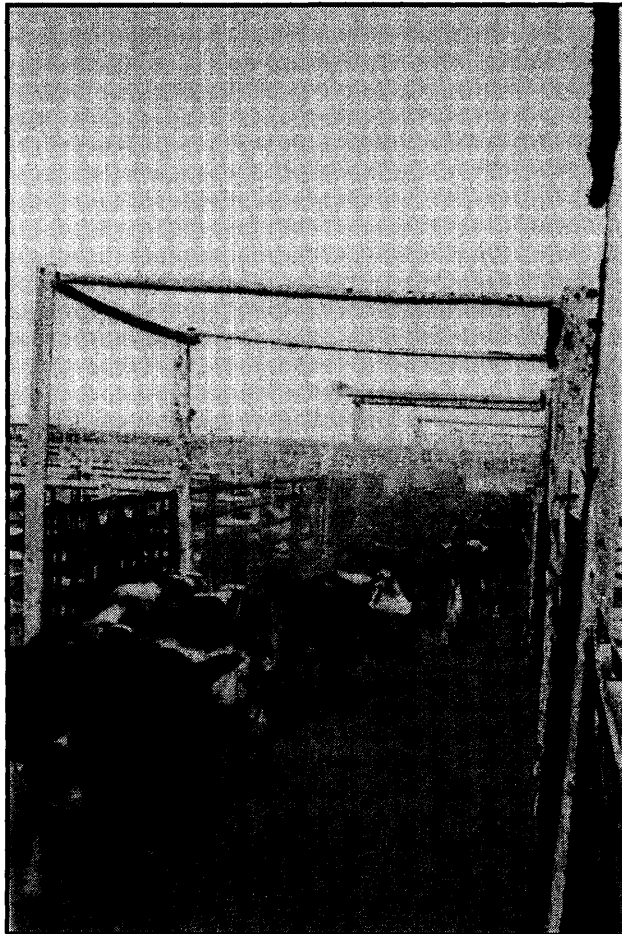


Figure 4. The corral area of the headquarters site is shown in these 1930s views: left, cattle move through the central alley and right, cattle move through the dipping vat. SOURCE: Copyright Linger Family Collection, Aurora, Colorado.

Corral, structure, pre-1912, Photos 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15. An extensive, complex, and very intact corral complex, befitting a cattle ranch of large size, is located south of the buildings of the ranch headquarters. Based on historic photos, the corral area was considerably expanded after the

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Medano Ranch Headquarters, Alamosa County, CO

purchase of the ranch by George W. Linger in 1912. The corral features many elements representative of large scale stock operations in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The corral is irregular and measures approximately 550 feet (east-west) by 300 feet (north-south). There is a wide central alley (about 15 feet wide) running east-west (Photograph 11). The fences of the corral are composed of log posts and horizontal poles; one section of fencing has multiple "X" bracing. Corner gates are equipped with counterweights to permit their operation with a minimum number of workers and are so arranged to facilitate a variety of movements between different parts of the corral. Interior fences divide the corral into different functional areas. The section of the corral north of the alley contains, from east to west: four weaning corrals; a large holding corral; a smaller holding corral, and a cow corral (north of the small holding corral). The section of the corral south of the alley features, from east to west: two weaning corrals and a large holding corral. Two large horse corrals with rounded corners are situated west of the main portion of the corral area at the end of the alley.

A loading chute is located south of the central alley at its east end. A branding chute with dehorning clamp (Photograph 12) and scales (Photograph 13) are south of the alley at its west end. The scales are enclosed in a frame and have a wood platform and an intact reading panel to the west. A butchering pen and carcass derrick are located on the north side of the alley northeast of the scales. A similar carcass derrick appeared in a 1909 book of *Handy Farm Devices and How to Make Them*.⁵ A large dipping vat is located at the south edge of the corral near the center (Photograph 14). The dipping vat has a concrete center portion with entrance and exit chutes. Elaborate vertical gates with counterweights control ingress and egress from the vat. South of the center of the vat lies the boiler (which heated the water used in the treatment), with a concrete cistern and pump base (Photograph 15). Based on stamped markings, the boiler apparently originally powered a threshing machine. Ranchhand Walt Stahlecker, who worked at the ranch from 1937 to 1942, explained that the boiler was needed to heat the vat water with steam so that the treatment for lice infestations would be effective.⁶

Noncontributing Resources

Machine Shed (Resource 2), building, post-1947, Photograph 16. The machine shed is a long rectangular (81' 5" X 20' 7") structure with a shed roof with projecting overhang above the open south wall. The walls are squared logs with round outer faces (D logs) and there is board chinking between the logs. The unnotched corners are stacked on top of each other. Between the roof and the log walls are vertical boards. The shed has a concrete foundation with corrugated metal along the foundation. The south wall has eight open bays. Some bays have horizontal timber and plywood divisions. The bays have dirt floors. The roof is supported by log posts with sawn trusswork atop concrete piers. The shed is classified as noncontributing because it was erected after the period of significance.

⁵ Rolfe Cobleigh, *Handy Farm Devices and How to Make Them* (N.p.: The Lyons Press, 1996), 99-102.

⁶ Stahlecker, 57-59.

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Medano Ranch Headquarters, Alamosa County, CO

Metal Silo (Resource 3), structure, post-1947. The cylindrical metal silo is a modern factory-made galvanized steel structure with a low conical top that is ribbed, with a cap at the top. The walls are corrugated, with horizontal ribs. The base is concrete and projects outward. There are three spouts (on the northeast, southwest, and south walls) and a narrow, hinged, metal door on the east. It is classified as noncontributing because it was erected after the period of significance.

Shed (Resource 4), building, post-1947, Photograph 17. The one-story, rectangular (48' 1" X 20' 4") log shed has a low side gable roof, slight eave overhang, and exposed rafters. The building has corrugated galvanized steel roofing. Gable faces are clad with flush vertical boards. The walls are composed of mostly unhewn round logs with daubing and square notches. The shed has a concrete foundation with corrugated metal along the foundation. The north wall has pedestrian doors at each end. The doors are composed of plywood and have vertical boards on both sides with iron rings. The west gable face has a small four-light window. The south wall has a large central entrance (boarded up). The south wall is patched with boards on the west end, and there are two vertical boards attached to the wall flanking the entrance. An opening on the east gable face is covered up. The shed is classified as noncontributing because it was erected (possibly from materials salvaged from historic ranch buildings) after the period of significance.

Machine Shed (Resource 7), building, post-1947. The machine shed is a long, narrow, one-story, rectangular (84' 4" X 25') log building with a side gable roof with corrugated metal roofing, overhanging eaves, and exposed rafters. The walls are composed of squared logs with round exterior faces (D logs) which continue to the eaves. The logs are cut off at the corners and unnotched. The east wall has five open bays in the south half that have board gates with cross bracing. The roof is supported by unpeeled logs and the floor is dirt. The stall furthest north is used for storage and has no gate. The building is noncontributing because it was erected after the period of significance.

Alterations

After World War II, ranching became more mechanized and there was no longer any need for some of the facilities for draft horses. The number of workers living at the ranch also diminished. The milk cow barn and saddle horse barns, which were located to the west, were removed after 1947, as were the Corner House and the Overflow Bunkhouse. A 1976 survey form for the property noted that "many of the smaller log buildings no longer needed in present day ranching are gone. About 50% of the original structures are still at the Medano." During the Stewart era (1947-1971), the main house was expanded and some outbuildings were reconfigured. Faced with flooding after his purchase of the property in 1988, Hisayoshi Ota raised some of the buildings and installed new concrete foundations. He also moved at least one building (the cottonseed cake house) to its present location.

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Medano Ranch Headquarters, Alamosa County, CO

Resources in Medano Ranch Headquarters Historic District

Resource Number	Resource	Type	Contributing Status
N/A	Headquarters Site	Site	Contributing
2	Machine Shed	Building	Noncontributing
3	Metal Silo	Structure	Noncontributing
4	Shed	Building	Noncontributing
5	Draft Horse Barn	Building	Contributing
6	Outhouse	Building	Contributing
7	Machine Shed	Building	Noncontributing
9	Harness Shed	Building	Contributing
10	Bunkhouse	Building	Contributing
11	Meat House	Structure	Contributing
13	Cook's House	Building	Contributing
14	Main Ranch House	Building	Contributing
18	Cottonseed Cake House	Structure	Contributing
N/A	Corral Complex	Structure	Contributing

NOTE: Numbers were assigned based on those used on a CAD drawing of the headquarters area developed by Ekaterina Vlachos, University of Colorado at Denver. Some numbers were assigned to features which are not counted for purposes of the nomination (e.g., an entry gate) and, therefore, do not appear in the above table.

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Medano Ranch Headquarters, Alamosa County, CO

Statement of Significance

The Medano Ranch is significant under Criterion A in the area of agriculture for its association with the development of cattle ranching in the San Luis Valley from the open range days of the 1870s through the mechanized operations of the period following World War II. The Medano is one of the oldest continuously operated properties in the area and its buildings and structures reflect the evolution of ranching as a large-scale enterprise during the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The history of the ranch incorporates the sweeping historical themes associated with ranching in Colorado, including the driving of Texas cattle to the area in the 1870s, the entrance of eastern investors into the region's cattle ranching, the use of sham homestead claims and intimidation of earlier settlers to acquire immense tracts of land during the nineteenth century, the difficulty of surviving during periods of economic distress, the continued consolidation of lands during the twentieth century, and the application of modern ranching techniques and participation in stockmen's associations during the twentieth century. The ranch traces its beginnings to the range cattle industry of the 1870s when two Ohio brothers, Valentine B. and William W. Dickey, brought large numbers of Texas cattle into the San Luis Valley. The Dickeys marketed their beef in the mining camp of Leadville and began assembling small holdings of other ranchers in the area into a larger property. The Dickey brothers established the headquarters area during this period and the Medano Springs post office was located here. After the Dickeys sold out in 1882, the operation and consolidations continued under Niel G. Adee and William W. Durkee, wealthy easterners who organized the Medano Springs Land and Cattle Company in 1886. Adee and Durkee were described as "cattle kings" who were the major producers in the Valley. Their tenure was impacted by the downturn in cattle prices during the 1880s and the effects of the Silver Panic of 1893. After two short-term owners, the ranch was acquired by George W. Linger in 1912. Under the Linger family, the ranch became a fed-cattle operation, supplementing grazing with the feeding of cottonseed cake and corn. The Lingers ushered the ranch into the modern era, and members of the family were prominent in Colorado cattle organizations. Howard Linger, for example, was a director of the National Western Stock Show for forty-two years, president of the Colorado Cattlemen's Association, and first president of the San Luis Valley Cattlemen's Association. The Lingers operated the ranch until 1947 and were widely respected in the cattle industry. When they sold the property, it was described as a "great" ranch famous for its Herefords and horses and known throughout the West.

The ranch headquarters is also eligible under Criterion C for its architecture, as representative of the heart of a major San Luis Valley cattle ranch that began as a range cattle operation, grew greatly in physical extent as smaller holdings were consolidated, and evolved into a fed-cattle Hereford business in the early twentieth century. The surrounding landscape of the ranch remains unchanged, providing a sense of the isolation of the site as well as its natural beauty. The buildings are classic examples of the variety of materials and construction techniques found on ranches of great longevity. An important aspect of the buildings is their representation of the common ranch practice of recycling and reusing existing structures and joining smaller buildings together to create larger ones. One of the buildings, the draft horse barn, reflects New Mexican influences in its design. The extensive corral maintains exceptional physical integrity and features all of the components needed by a major cattle operation, including the dipping vat, alley, scales, branding chute, and butchering pen with

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Medano Ranch Headquarters, Alamosa County, CO

carcass derrick. While several original buildings are gone, the remaining buildings display a variety of function and good historic physical integrity. The ranch yard is notable for its unusual "square" layout and remnants of the boardwalk which linked the buildings remain. The post-1947 resources and alterations are generally compatible in terms of scale and materials and are the result of continued ranch operations. The period of significance for the ranch extends from 1877 (the creation of the headquarters site with a post office operated by W.W. Dickey) through 1947 (the end of the Linger era).

Origin of the Ranch: The Dickey Brothers

Government explorer Ferdinand V. Hayden had observed the character of the San Luis Valley during his 1873 traverse of the area: "As a stock-growing region, it is evident that this district could not be surpassed. The purity and dryness of the atmosphere, and the absence of deep snows permit the rich grasses to dry up gradually in August, and retain all their nutritious matter; and cattle, horses, and sheep thrive all through the winter without special care." Today's Medano Ranch traces its origins to the beginnings of large-scale cattle raising in the San Luis Valley. Ohio-born brothers William W. and Valentine B. Dickey moved to the site in the early 1870s, consolidating smaller landholdings and reportedly becoming "cattle kings," running perhaps twenty thousand head of cattle. One source states that they "purchased the land titles of the poverty-stricken Mexican settlers in the Zapata district" and amassed 9,000 acres of deeded land and 90,000 of leased state land. Other sources indicate that the Hispanic settlers were pressured to leave the area by members of the Dickey operation. Historian David W. Lantis also reported that "major Colorado cattle ranchers had each of their cowhands file on land, which was relinquished to the operators for nominal fees as soon as it was proved up. This practice was followed in the Valley, although its extent is uncertain."⁷

The Dickey brothers apparently took steps to develop the site as their ranch headquarters during the 1876-77 period. Edward Hull had homesteaded the location in 1875, building a one-story log house (20'X30'), with a pole and dirt roof and two windows and two doors. Hull raised hay on the property and received a patent for it in 1880. Prior to receiving his final patent, Hull sold the property for \$800 to Alvin B. Daniels and Darwin S. Fish in December 1875. The Dickey brothers bought the headquarters site from Daniels and Fish in July 1876 for \$2,000.⁸

⁷ F.V. Hayden, quoted in Ora B. Peake, *The Colorado Range Cattle Industry* (Glendale, California: Arthur H. Clark Company, 1937), 61; Martha Oliver, "Cattle in the Valley," *San Luis Valley Historian* 17 (1985):3; David W. Lantis, "The San Luis Valley, Colorado: Sequent Rural Occupance in an Intermontane Basin," doctoral dissertation, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio, 1950, 178 and 189; U.S. National Archives, Records of the Appointments of Colorado Postmasters, 1877-91, in the files of the Denver Public Library, Western History and Genealogy Department, Denver, Colorado; *Denver Republican*, 5 April 1890. The ranch lands are within the putative Medano and Zapata Land Grant. A Congressional committee examined the claim in 1879 and concluded that it was "not a valid claim." See Forbes Parkhill, "Colorado's Earliest Settlements," *Colorado Magazine* 34 (October 1957):252.

⁸ The current headquarters area had not been developed by 1875, when the township was surveyed. No structures were shown on the 1875 General Land Office plat of Township 40 North, Range 12 East, although several cabins were noted in other sections. General Land Office surveyor A.W. Brewster, while surveying the east line of section 17 immediately east of the headquarters site in 1875, made no mention of any buildings at the location. A.W. Brewster, General Land Office, Surveyor's Notes, Township 40 North, Range 12 East, 21-26 August 1875, 344 and 346, in the files of the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Colorado State Office, Lakewood, Colorado; Edward Hull, Cash Entry Patent, number 75, Township

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In April 1877, Valentine Dickey homesteaded 160 acres in Section 18 (immediately to the west) and built a one-room log house, a corral, irrigating ditches, and fences. In June 1877 a Medano Springs post office was created with William W. Dickey as postmaster. The establishment of the post office at the site is the first documented indication of its use as a headquarters by the Dickeys. Wesley Cole, who came to the area in 1879 and worked as a freighter, cook, and herder for the Dickeys, recalled that "the home ranch for the cattle operations was on Spring Creek and is now called the Medano." Similarly, Armond Choury, who came to the San Luis Valley in 1880 and taught school, recounted that the "Meadow Springs ranch buildings" were in existence at that time. An 1885 township map of Colorado shows "Medano Springs" in Section 17 at the site of the present Medano headquarters.⁹

The Dickeys reportedly drove in large herds of cattle from Texas, grazed them in the Valley, and then took them to market. The youthful brothers saw the booming mining camp of Leadville as a perfect outlet for their beef and erected the Dickey Block on Harrison Avenue. The building housed their large wholesale and retail meat market, which was supplied periodically by driving cattle to the Cloud City. William handled the Leadville side of the business, while Valentine operated the ranch. In July 1879, the *Evening Chronicle* published an extensive description of the market and noted that "the Dickey Brothers have long been in the cattle trade in Colorado, and have accumulated about seven thousand beef cattle." William became a member of the Colorado Cattlegrowers Association in 1879.¹⁰

The 1880 U.S. Census for Colorado listed both Dickey brothers: William W. Dickey, then twenty-nine years old and single, appeared in Leadville as a "cattle dealer," while Valentine was listed as a 25-year-old single "stock grower" living at Medano Springs, Costilla County. The Dickeys also operated a freighting firm which hauled supplies to the San Juan region. The brothers patented 720 acres of lands in the San Luis Valley, in today's Alamosa and Saguache counties.¹¹

40 North, Range 12 East, Section 17, Northwest Quarter, 160 acres, in the files of the National Archives, Record Group 49, Washington, DC; Edward Hull to Alvin B. Daniels and Darwin S. Fish, Deed, Costilla County Records, Book 3, Page 125, 1 December 1875.

⁹ Alvin B. Daniels and Darwin S. Fish to W.W. and V. Dickey, Deed, Costilla County Records, Book 3, Page 151, 14 July 1876; Valentine B. Dickey, Homestead entry, number 301, Township 40 North, Range 12 East, Section 18, 160.04 acres, in the files of the National Archives, Record Group 49, Washington, DC; Records of Appointments of Colorado Postmasters, 1877-91, Costilla County, in the files of National Archives, Washington, DC; Wesley Cole, Civil Works Administration interview, Charles E. Gibson, Jr., interviewer, 1933-34, in the files of the Colorado Historical Society, Denver, Colorado; Armond Choury, "Experiences in the San Luis Valley," *Colorado Magazine* 24 (1947):121; "New Sectional map of Colorado, 1885," published for *Croft's Grip-Sack Guide of Colorado*.

¹⁰ U.S. Census Bureau, Population Census, 1880, Lake County, Colorado; Valentine B. Dickey, Cash Entry, number 207, 1 June 1882, Township 44N, Range 10E, Section 21, NW ¼, Saguache County, and Homestead Entry, number 301, 10 July 1883, Township 40N, Range 12E, Section 18, E ½ NW ¼ and SW ¼ NE ¼, Alamosa County, General Land Office, Record Group 49, National Archives, Washington; William W. Dickey, Cash Entry, number 976, 30 July 1874, Township 44N, Range 10E, Section 21, SW ¼, Saguache County, and Cash Entry, number 75, 17 September 1890, Township 44N, Range 10E, Section 14, W ½ NW ¼ and Section 15, E ½ NE ¼, Saguache County, General Land Office, Record Group 49, National Archives, Washington; *Rocky Mountain News*, 16 January 1879, 4; *Evening Chronicle*, 1 July 1879, cited in Don Griswold and Jeanne Harvey Griswold, *History of Leadville and Lake County, Colorado: From Mountain Solitude to Metropolis* (Denver: Colorado Historical Society in cooperation with the University Press of Colorado, 1996), 301-02.

¹¹ Neither Dickey was listed in the 1870 Census returns for Colorado Territory. U.S. Census Bureau, Population Census, 1880, Lake County, Colorado; Valentine B. Dickey, Cash Entry, number 207, 1 June 1882, Township 44N, Range 10E,

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Irwin Thomle, in a study of San Luis Valley agriculture, observed that “as early as 1880 stock raising had become a well-established business.” The arrival of the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad in the area in 1878 facilitated access to the Denver market. The agricultural schedule of the 1880 Census provides insights into the extent of the Dickeys’ operations. In June 1880, Valentine Dickey reported an impressive total ranch value of \$31,675, including \$1,575 in land, buildings, and fences, \$100 in implements and machinery, and \$30,000 in livestock. The property included 400 acres of grassland from which forty tons of hay were harvested in 1879. Dickey listed three thousand cattle, fifty horses, and three mules or asses. During the previous year, the ranch had 1,200 calves dropped, purchased 400 head of cattle, sold 1,800 head, slaughtered 60 head, and had 200 head die or stray. Six thousand dollars was paid to ranch hands during 1879.¹²

The Dickeys sold their enterprise to Niel [sic] G. Adee and William Wells Durkee in 1882. The Dickey Meat Market was not listed in Leadville city directories after the 1880 edition, although William was listed at residential addresses there in the 1881 through 1883 directories. According to one source, the rigors of ranch life undermined the Dickey brothers’ health: William died in 1886 at 34 and Valentine in 1890 at 35.¹³

Eastern Investment and Expansion: Adee and Durkee

New Yorker Niel G. Adee was operating a ranch in the San Luis Valley by 1878. The *Colorado Springs Gazette* of 7 September 1878 reported that Adee’s ranch was “situated 20 miles northeast of Alamosa, near the base of Sierra Blanca, on the banks of Zapato (shoe) creek; and is described as the handsomest ranch in the entire valley.” This was probably what is now known as the Zapata Ranch, which is adjacent to the Medano Ranch. Niel Adee and his father, Charles T. Adee, each patented tracts of slightly more than 160 acres in present-day Alamosa County in 1879. There was some early interaction between Adee and the Dickeys. In May 1878, Adee received \$4,000 from Valentine Dickey for all cattle in Costilla County then branded with the “100” or “Bar 100” marks. Niel Adee served as the postmaster at Zapato from June 1880 until December 1885.¹⁴

Section 21, NW ¼, Saguache County, and Homestead Entry, number 301, 10 July 1883, Township 40N, Range 12E, Section 18, E ½ NW ¼ and SW ¼ NE ¼, Alamosa County, General Land Office, Record Group 49, National Archives, Washington; William W. Dickey, Cash Entry, number 976, 30 July 1874, Township 44N, Range 10E, Section 21, SW ¼, Saguache County, and Cash Entry, number 75, 17 September 1890, Township 44N, Range 10E, Section 14, W ½ NW ¼ and Section 15, E ½ NE ¼, Saguache County, General Land Office, Record Group 49, National Archives, Washington; *Rocky Mountain News*, 16 January 1879, 4.

¹² Irwin Thomle, “The Developmental Period in San Luis Valley Agriculture, 1898 to 1930,” doctoral dissertation, Northwestern University, Chicago, 1948, 33.

¹³ Leadville city directories, 1880-83; *Denver Republican*, 5 April 1890 (Valentine B. Dickey obituary).

¹⁴ *Colorado Springs Gazette*, 7 September 1878, citing an article in the *Alamosa Independent*, 27 August 1878, describing a visit by the editor of that publication to the ranch; no extant copy of the *Alamosa Independent* for that date was located. Adee’s parents, Charles T. and Mary G. Adee were living in Colorado Springs at the time of the 1880 Census. Niel G. Adee to Valentine B. Dickey, Sale deed, Costilla County Clerk and Recorder, Book 3, Page 319, 6 May 1878; U.S. National Archives, Records of the Appointments of Colorado Postmasters, 1877-91, *ibid.* The Zapata Ranch (5AL297) was listed in the National Register in 1993.

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Adee became associated with William Wells Durkee in 1880; in August of that year he deeded half interest in certain lands to Durkee. Durkee (1854-1907), a native of Williamsville, Erie County, New York, was a lawyer who graduated from the Columbia College Law School. He was the son of Eugene R. Durkee (1825-1902), who had founded the Durkee spice empire in 1850. When the elder Durkee retired in 1884, another son, Eugene W. Durkee, became president of the spice company.¹⁵

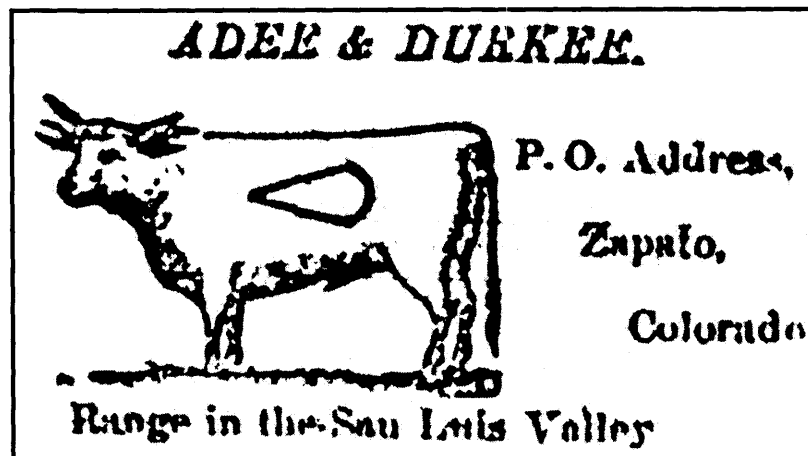


Figure 5. The brands of Adee & Durkee and other large ranches were published weekly in the local newspaper. SOURCE: *Alamosa Independent*, 25 September 1884, 2.

In May 1882, Adee and Durkee acquired the Dickey brothers lands and began operating a large ranch which included Adee's previous holdings. The ranch continued to be used for open range cattle grazing and hay ranching. One source suggests that the partners also used sham homestead filings and intimidation to drive Hispanic settlers from the vicinity in order to further expand the holdings of the ranch. By 1883, the property included the Medano, Zapato, and Taylor ranches and "was the major cattle producer of the Valley." The *Alamosa Independent*, in February 1883, characterized Adee and Durkee as "cattle kings" and published an extensive description of their operations:

They pay out about \$1,000 per month for wages, except in haying-time, when they pay out over \$2,000 per month. They have about 130,000 acres of land under fence, 90,000 acres in one field. I saw nine miles of straight fence in one string. They have four wind-mills and are now running about 6,000 head of cattle. They have about 2,000 head of beef cattle over four years old. They are now feeding their beef cattle and expect to feed them 800 tons of hay, which is only a part of the yield of hay put up by them last fall. They expect to have these 2,000 head of beef cattle ready for the market this spring. They are putting in a six-ton scale at their centre ranch [Zapato] and will hereafter handle cattle entirely by weight. Their ranches are all in perfect order.¹⁶

¹⁵ Joseph J Fucini and Suzy Fucini, *Entrepreneurs: The Men and Women Behind Famous Brand Names and How They Made It* (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1985), 190.

¹⁶ *San Juan Prospector*, 17 February 1883, 3, reprinting article from the *Alamosa Independent*.

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In 1886, the Medano Springs Land and Cattle Company was formed to operate the ranch, and lands owned by the two partners were transferred to the corporation. In addition to Adee and Durkee, the original incorporators of the company included Eugene R. Durkee, Mary G. Adee (Niel's mother), and Charles Crary. Eugene R. Durkee of Brooklyn, New York, was the president and treasurer, while William W. Durkee was the secretary.¹⁷

William Durkee apparently divided his time between the ranch and trips to the East. He had sufficient local ties in the Valley to win election to the Colorado General Assembly in 1886, where he served a two-year term (1887-88). Some sources describe Niel Adee as the onsite manager for the ranching operation. Adee committed suicide in March 1887; his reasons for ending his life are unclear. According to stories told to Bob Linger, Adee was a heavy drinker and his suicide followed a drinking bout. An article in the *Rocky Mountain News* (discounted by the *Alamosa Independent*), asserted that Adee had "seemed humiliated" by his relationship with a Pueblo woman, who had defrauded him of a large sum of money. Agnes King, whose father attended the inquest, stated that Adee left a note reading "I do not want to cause my father any more trouble or expense, will not make any more mess than I can help," and then cut his throat over a washbasin. Bob Linger was told that the washbasin in question was located in the bunkhouse at the Medano.¹⁸

Durkee continued the ranching operation after his partner's death. A condition statement for the company issued 1 January 1888 showed total assets of \$277,100, including \$141,300 in land and improvements and \$120,065 in cattle, horses, and mules. The operation shipped cattle to distant markets by rail. During 1889, cattle were periodically shipped to Denver from Ft. Garland via the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad from March through November. The *Alamosa Independent-Journal* reported that "the Medano cattle bring the top price in the Denver market."¹⁹

Durkee also acquired additional lands for the ranch. In 1889, he purchased a number of smaller inholdings within the outer boundary of the property. In 1891, Durkee received a pre-emption claim for the 160 acres comprising the east half of the southwest quarter of Section 17, Township 12 South, Range 40 East (a tract immediately south of today's Medano headquarters area). He indicated that he settled on this land in June 1889 and that no improvements were present at that time. In 1889 and 1890, Durkee erected a one-room frame house (12'X14', with a board roof, board floor, one window, one door), 1.5 miles of irrigating ditch, 1.5 miles of fence, an 18'X18' cellar, two board corrals (each 100' square), and an artesian well. It is not clear if Durkee's facilities were built adjacent to the

¹⁷ The May 1882 transaction included approximately 1,760 acres for \$5,000. Costilla County Records, Book B, Page 43, 1 May 1882; *San Juan Prospector* (Del Norte), 17 February 1883; Canda Mitchell, "King and Calkins, 1886-1996: 110 Years of San Luis Valley History," in the files of The Nature Conservancy, Mosca, Colorado; James Villa Dexter, manuscript collection number 206, file folder 214, Colorado Historical Society, Denver, Colorado.

¹⁸ While colorful, Mrs. King's account is somewhat suspect, as Adee's father pre-deceased him and she incorrectly places Adee's death in November 1886. *San Juan Prospector*, 26 March 1887, 3; *Rocky Mountain News*, 21 March 1887, 5; *Alamosa Independent-Journal*, 24 March 1887; Agnes King, "Settlement of Uracca Recounted by Member of First Family in District," Blanca, Colorado, undated, in the files of The Nature Conservancy, Mosca, Colorado.

¹⁹ Statement of Condition of the Medano Springs Land and Cattle Company, Costilla County Records, Book 6, Page 104, 1 January 1888; *San Luis Valley Courier*, 13 March 1887; *Alamosa Independent-Journal*, 14 November 1889.

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Medano headquarters. Durkee was still listed as the general manager of the ranch in 1894. He died in Los Angeles, California, in 1907.²⁰

Economic Difficulties and Years of Transition

The ranch operated by the Medano Springs Land and Cattle Company fell upon financial difficulties in the 1890s, perhaps resulting from declining markets for its products following the Panic of 1893. In 1894, George H. Adams became trustee of the ranch company, appointed for the purpose of winding up the firm's affairs. A circa 1894 map and memorandum book in the library of the Colorado Historical Society provides information on the status of the business. At that time, the enterprise embraced the Medano Ranch with 5,507 deeded acres, the Zapato Ranch of 2,798 acres, and the Taylor Ranch of 321 acres. In addition to 8,626 deeded acres, the operation also had 2,000 head of cattle and 40 horses, for an estimated total value of \$112,760. Also included were a considerable extent of leased state lands.²¹

In 1898, George H. Adams purchased the property. Adams (1845-1904) was a Wisconsin native who had come to the San Luis Valley in 1869 to engage in stock raising. He was a pioneer cattleman who became proprietor of the vast Baca Grant Number 4 and amassed a fortune. Adams sold the Medano and associated lands to Loren B. Sylvester of Monte Vista and Richard Hosford of Dubuque County, Iowa, in 1901. A Wisconsin native, Sylvester had come to the San Luis Valley from Iowa in 1891. Sylvester was later (in 1918) the founder of the Ski-Hi Stampede in Monte Vista and was active in the National Rodeo Association. An analysis of the title to the lands held by Sylvester and Hosford in 1901 noted that "a large part of the land was cultivated for native hay and used as stock ranches." As cattle prices declined at the beginning of the twentieth century, Sylvester and Hosford experienced financial difficulties that soon left them approximately \$178,000 in debt. In 1907, the property was sold to satisfy outstanding debts, and Henry C. Flower, attorney for the Kansas City bank that had loaned them money, acquired the Medano Springs Ranch Company.²²

Twentieth Century Ranching Operations: The Linger Family

During the last decade of the nineteenth century, ranchers in the San Luis Valley started to abandon "scrub stock" for improved breeds such as Shorthorn, Hereford, and polled Angus. In 1900, there were 43,425 beef cattle on ranches in the counties comprising the San Luis Valley. Cattle prices declined until about 1905 (when the average price of a marketable steer was \$15 to \$16) and then improved to about \$34 per steer in 1913. The advent of World War I caused beef prices to soar, with the price of a steer reaching \$100 in 1914. The increase in prices caused the Valley cattle business

²⁰ William W. Durkee, Cash Entry Patent, number 2391, Township 40 North, Range 12 East, Section 17, 28 September 1891, in the files of the National Archives, Record Group 49, Washington, DC.

²¹ James Villa Dexter, manuscript collection number 206, file folder 214, and "Map of the Lands of Adee and Durkee, Zapato, Colorado," n.p., n.d., Colorado Historical Society, Denver, Colorado.

²² *San Luis Valley Courier*, 26 and 29 September 1955; Goudy and Twitchell, "Preliminary Opinion and Statement as to Title, Sylvester and Hosford Lands," Denver, Colorado, 10 December 1901, prepared for Flower, Peters, and Bowersock, attorneys at law, Kansas City, Missouri, in the Linger Family Collection, Aurora, Colorado..

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to expand; by 1920, there were 90,865 cattle on area ranches. Prices dropped quickly after the war ended in 1919, and, by 1925, the price of a marketable steer had fallen to \$19. This broader context affected the fortunes of Sylvester and Hosford and the Linger family, who occupied the ranch from 1912 through 1947.²³

In September 1912, the Medano Ranch and the Zapato Ranch to the southeast were sold to George Washington Linger by the Medano Springs Ranch Company (H.C. Flower, president). Linger was born in Ulster County, New York, in 1858, and moved west in 1878, pursuing a variety of trades until he became affiliated with Swift & Company of Chicago in 1892. In 1897 he came to Colorado to manage the North Park Cattle Company in present-day Jackson County for the Swifts. Entering the ranching business on his own, Linger paid \$200,000 for the Alamosa County property, which then embraced 12,947.73 deeded acres, 52,500 acres of leased state land, and water rights in ten ditches. A.H. Pryor, in a report on the ranch at the time of its sale, asserted that the property was capable of producing ten thousand tons of blue stem hay a year. In Pryor's judgment, based on thirty years of work in the West, "this is the finest ranch I ever saw."²⁴

Figure 6 shows the configuration of the ranch's 65,287 acres of deeded and leased lands at the time of the sale. Three principal deeded areas are shown: the Medano in the north-central part, the Zapato in the east-central part, and the Taylor in the southeast section. The ranch extended approximately 16.5 miles north-south and 15.5 miles east-west. The present layout and components of the Medano Ranch headquarters area were clearly described on the c. 1912 sale brochure for the ranch:

The buildings on the Medano Ranch are log houses of the very best construction and unusual interior finish, being of yellow pine in hard oil. The various buildings are as follows:

- The Mansion House,
- The Superintendent's House,
- The Guests' House,
- The Men's Quarters,
- The Boarding House,
- The Blacksmith Shop,
- Two wagon and Machinery Sheds,
- Two horse barns and very extensive corrals.

The above buildings are all in one square group and constitute the Ranch Headquarters and are all in first class repair.

There are also two sets of buildings at Zapato and some buildings here and there on the property.²⁵

²³ Thomle, *ibid.*, 176-180.

²⁴ Wilbur Fisk Stone, *History of Colorado*, vol. III (Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1918), 66-68; "Description of Medano Springs Ranch," real estate brochure with map, c. 1912, in the Linger Family Collection.

²⁵ "Description of Medano Springs Ranch."

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Medano Ranch Headquarters, Alamosa County, CO

Prior to the Linger era, the ranch had been operated as a range cattle enterprise, with cattle grown and fattened from the vegetation on the open range owned or leased by the ranch. By contrast, G.W. Linger raised Herefords as a fed-cattle business, with range grazing assisted by such supplements as cottonseed cake and corn. The Medano was the headquarters of the vast cattle empire of the Lingers. By 1918, the property had increased to more than 25,000 deeded acres and 100,000 acres of leased land. In 1920, G.W. Linger purchased 7,500 acres of the Tierra Amarilla Grant in northern New Mexico, which was used as a summer range, with cattle feeding on its rich pastures from late May to early October. To access that range, cattle were initially trailed the entire distance to New Mexico; when a siding and loading chute were installed at Hooper in about 1930, cattle were trailed to Hooper and loaded aboard Denver and Rio Grande cattle cars for the trip. The cattle were returned to the Medano and Zapata ranches in early October in a seven-day, six-night cattle drive.²⁶

Although G.W. Linger died in 1921 (in a Denver airplane crash), his family continued ranching, at first as the Estate of George W. Linger. After the estate was settled in 1925, the operation reorganized as Linger Brothers & Co., comprised of sons Howard, Albert, and Lyman, and daughter Margaret. The four siblings bought out the interest of their brother, Earl Linger. When the San Luis Valley Cattlemen's Association was organized in March 1930, Howard K. Linger was elected as its first president. The Lingers expanded the ranch in the 1930s, when the Oliver Ranch to the west was acquired.²⁷

Albert's son, J. Robert "Bob" Linger, who was born in 1929, lived at the ranch each summer through the end of World War II and recalled that it was "terribly remote." Horses were still used to do most of the work on the ranch at that time. Mechanization did not come into play until after the war. The ranch did not receive REA electricity until 1951, although each of its three components had small generator plants for producing electrical light by the 1920s. Doris Linger (Howard Linger's wife) remembered that most lighting was provided by oil and Coleman gas lamps; coal and wood stoves were used for cooking and heating. Due to the scarcity of water, laundry was done once a week. Beef butchered on the ranch was stored in the meat house, with refrigeration provided by ice collected from nearby Dollar Lake.²⁸

²⁶ The chuckwagon used in the Linger cattle drives was donated by a later ranch owner to the Colorado Historical Society and is now on display at its museum in Denver. Stone, 66; J. Robert "Bob" Linger, interview, Aurora, Colorado, 22 November 2002; Stahlecker, 51-54.

²⁷ Oliver, 7; Thomas S. Chamblin, ed., *Encyclopedia of Colorado*, v. 1 (Denver: Colorado Historical Association, c. 1960), 480-81 (Howard K. Linger biography).

²⁸ Rosemarie Morris Stewart, "Zapata: Jewel of the San Luis Valley," 3 October 1992, in the files of The Nature Conservancy, Mosca, Colorado; she interviewed Doris Linger in about 1980.

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Medano Ranch Headquarters, Alamosa County, CO

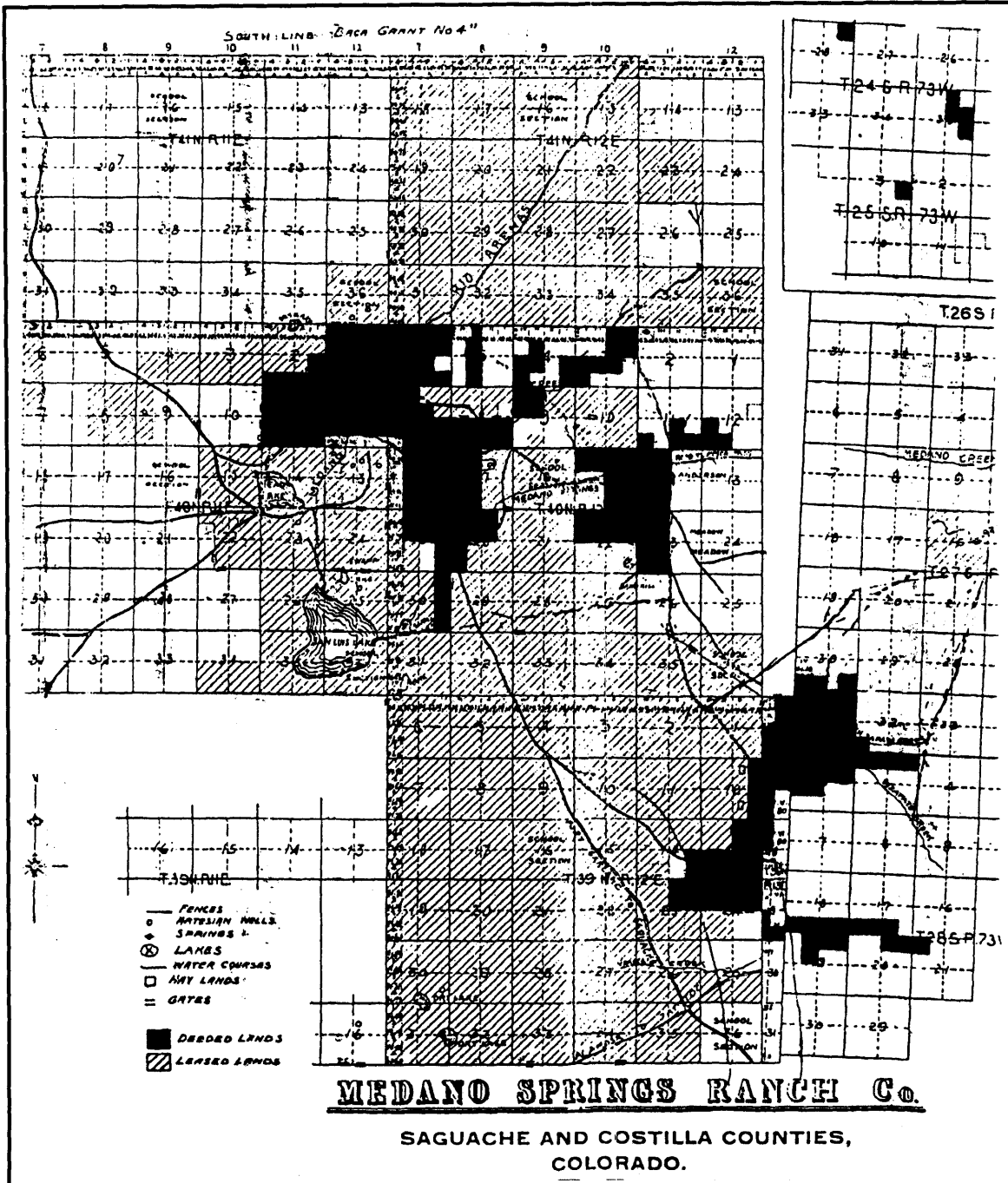


Figure 6. The extent of the ranch at the time of its purchase by George W. Linger is shown on this map, where deeded lands are shaded and leased lands hatched. Alamosa is to the southwest. SOURCE: Real estate brochure, c. 1912.

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Medano Ranch Headquarters, Alamosa County, CO



Figure 7. Aerial view, c. 1949, of the Medano Headquarters site (view southeast). The main ranchhouse is in the trees at the bottom of the photograph. SOURCE: Lantis, 577.

The Lingers continued to operate the ranch until 1947, when oilman Malcolm Stewart, Sr., of Dalhart, Texas, purchased the 27,800 acres of deeded ranch land for \$900,000. The *Denver Post* commented on the sale: "The great ranch and its famous Hereford feeder cattle and honor-taking horses are well known thruout [sic] the West and in the Corn Belt. Equally well known are the three Linger brothers, who with their sister, sold the attractive holdings."

After the Linger Era

Stewart continued to operate the property as a cattle ranch, with he and his wife living at the headquarters of the Zapata Ranch.²⁹ His son, Malcolm Stewart, Jr. (a veteran of World War II's 10th Mountain Division) and his wife, Mary Helen, resided at the Medano. Chester Dulaney, who began working for Stewart in 1930, served as ranch foreman until the mid-1960s. Stewart added additional lands to his holdings until he had more than one million acres in Colorado and New Mexico. His granddaughter remarked that "my granddad loved to acquire land and I honestly believe that he would have sold or traded anything he owned for another acre of land." The elder Stewart died in 1959. In 1971, the Medano Ranch portion of the operation (consisting of 15,300 deeded and 27,000

²⁹ During the twentieth century, the Zapato Ranch came to be known as the Zapata.

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Medano Ranch Headquarters, Alamosa County, CO

leased acres) was sold to Clarence M. Holden of Houston, Texas, and Harold F. Vessels of Englewood, Colorado. In 1975, the Medano was acquired by John Firestone of Colorado Springs (organized as the N B H Land Company).³⁰

The Otake International Corporation, comprised of two Japanese partners, purchased the Medano and Zapata ranches in 1988. Hisayoshi Ota, an architect, bought out his partner after a year and became sole owner. Ota developed the Great Sand Dunes Country Club & Inn at the Zapata Ranch, as well as raising bison on the remainder of the ranch. Ken Klemm managed the bison operation, which had the largest bison herd in the state at that time. Ota sold the ranch to The Nature Conservancy, a nonprofit environmental preservation group, in 1999 for \$6.5 million. The property was appraised at \$10.5 million, but Ota sold it to The Nature Conservancy at a lower price in order to preserve the land. The Nature Conservancy is an environmental organization that acquires large tracts of land to protect entire ecosystems.³¹

³⁰ Orville Howard, "Zapata Now Cowboy Country Club," undated newspaper clipping, in the files of The Nature Conservancy, Mosca, Colorado; Stewart, *ibid.*; *Pueblo Chieftain*, 24 September 1971, 9A, and 31 March 1982, 6A

³¹ *Denver Post*, undated clipping in the Linger Family Collection, Aurora, Colorado; *A Higher Plain*, 10 September 1999.

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Geographic Information

Verbal Boundary Description

As there are no internal legal subdivisions, visible features on the land were used to define the boundary of the nominated area, which is described as follows: beginning at the intersection of an unnamed irrigation ditch with the west edge of the unnamed road leading to County Road 6N Lane; thence westerly along the irrigation ditch to a point 25 feet beyond the westernmost edge of the corral; thence northerly, maintaining the 25 feet distance with the western edge of the corral and the western walls of Resource Number 18 and Resource Number 7 to the intersection with the western edge of the aforesaid unnamed road; and thence easterly and southerly along the western edge of that road to the point of beginning. The nominated area is located within Polygon ABCD shown on the Sketch and USGS maps.

Boundary Justification

The nominated area includes all of the property historically associated with the operations of the ranch headquarters, including the building grouping and the corral.

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Medano Ranch Headquarters, Alamosa County, CO

Common Photographic Label Information:

1. Name: Medano Ranch
2. Location: Mosca vicinity, Alamosa County, Colorado
3. Photographer: T.H. Simmons
4. Negative on file at: The Nature Conservancy
5303 Colo. Hwy. 150
Mosca, CO 81146

Information Different for Each View:

5. Photograph Number, Description of View, Camera Direction, and Photo Date

Photograph Number	Description of View	Camera Direction	Photo Date
1	Overview of headquarters with Sangre de Cristo Mountains in distance	ESE	March 2003
2	The Cook's House, Meat House, Bunkhouse, and Harness Shed (Resource Numbers 13, 11, 10, and 9, left to right) on the eastern edge of the site	E	October 2002
3	Wood boardwalk in front of Harness Shed (Resource 9)	E	October 2002
4	Main Ranch House (Resource 14)	NW	October 2002
5	Main Ranch House (Resource 14)	NE	October 2002
6	Bunkhouse (Resource 10)	WSW	October 2002
7	Cook's House (Resource 13)	WNW	October 2002
8	Harness Shed (Resource 9)	NE	October 2002
9	Meat House (Resource 11)	NNW	October 2002
10	Outhouse (Resource 6)	SE	October 2002
11	Corral-alley	E	October 2002

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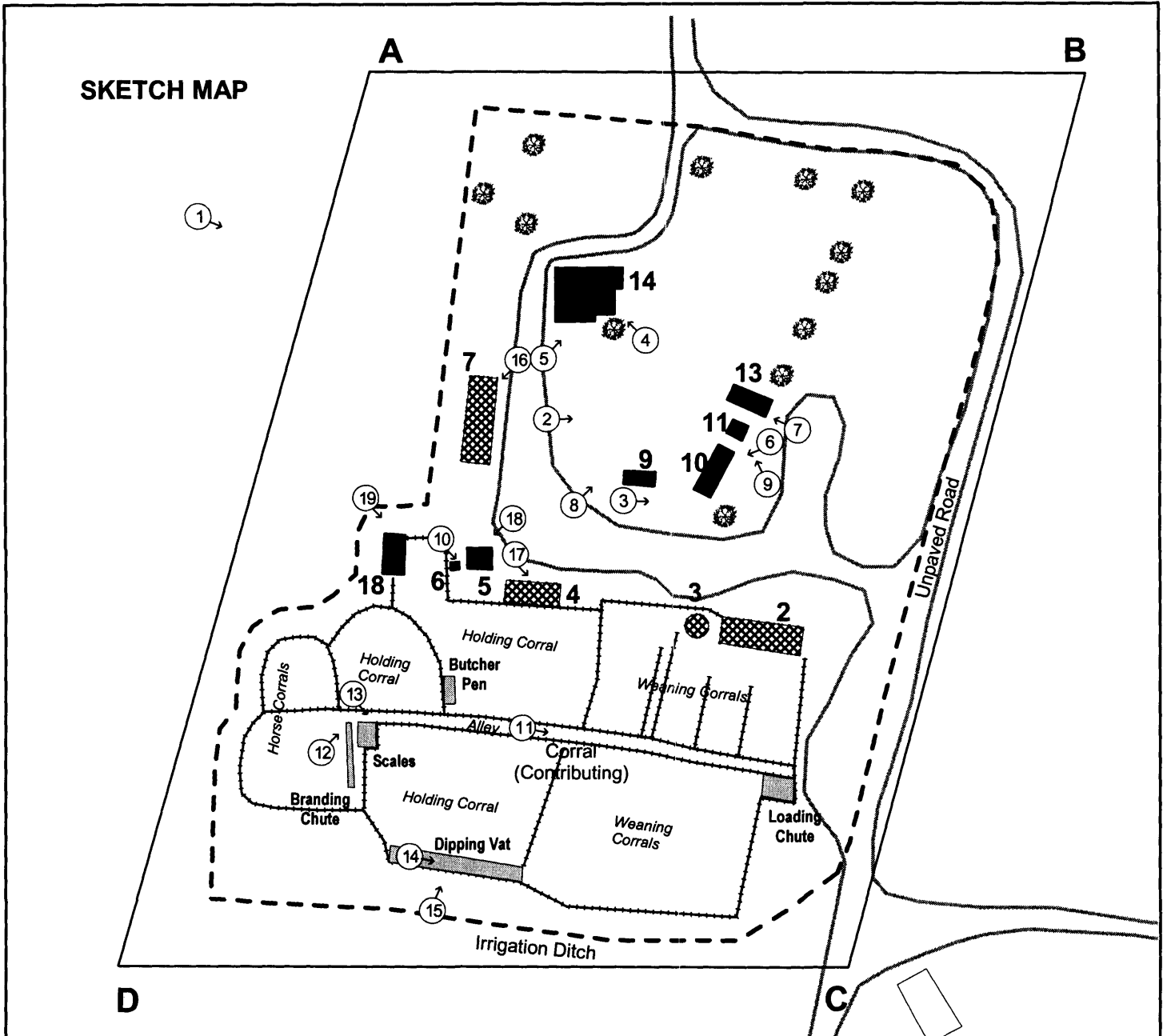
Medano Ranch Headquarters, Alamosa County, CO




Photograph Number	Description of View	Camera Direction	Photo Date
12	Corral-branding chute	NE	October 2002
13	Corral-scales	SE	October 2002
14	Corral-dipping vat	E	October 2002
15	Corral-dipping vat boiler	NE	October 2002
16	Machine Shed (Resource 2)	NW	October 2002
17	Storage Shed (Resource 4)	SE	October 2002
18	Draft Horse Barn (Resource 5)	SW	October 2002
19	Cottonseed Cake Shed (Resource 18)	SE	October 2002

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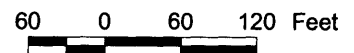
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Medano Ranch Headquarters, Alamosa County, CO



	Contributing
	Noncontributing
	Not in District

Dashed line is the historic district boundary.
Building numbers are keyed to narrative discussion.
Numbers in circles with arrows are photographic references.
Polygon ABCD is the bounding UTM area.

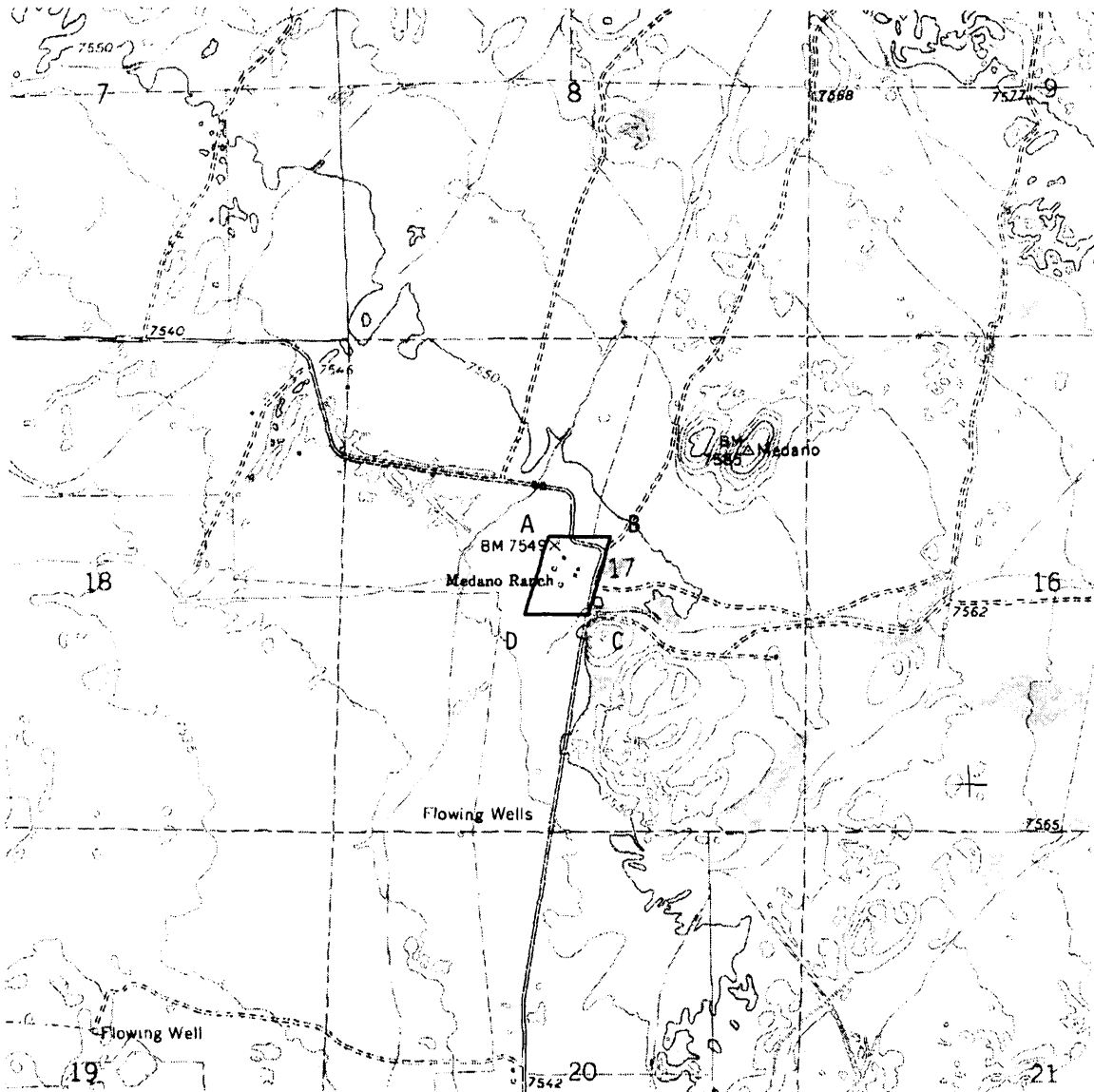


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Medano Ranch Headquarters, Alamosa County, CO

USGS MAP EXTRACT



SOURCE: Extract of U.S. Geological Survey, "Medano Ranch, Colo.," 7.5 minute topographic map (Reston, Virginia: U.S. Geological Survey, 1965). Arrow indicates location of nominated resource.