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Taos County, Red River  
Red River Multiple Resource Area1. Name: Mallette, Sylvester M. (Vet), Cabin (Red River, Multiple Resource Area)2. Location: northwest corner of River Street and Copper King4. Owner: Robert and Esther Prunty  
P.O. Box 176  
Red River, New Mexico 875587. Description: The Sylvester M. (Vet) Mallette Cabin is a one-story, single, rectangular log pen with a low-pitched gabled roof, measuring about 31'4" across the front and about 20' at the sides. It is constructed of round, unhewn logs, V-notched at the corners. Two "shed rooms" of unhewn, saddle-notched logs are attached to the rear. They each measure about 15' square.

The original entrance door is board-and-batten and is centered in the front (east) facade. The logs are more than a foot in diameter. They are chinked with strips of split wood and mud. The log sills rest on the ground. At the peak of the gable are double ridge poles consisting of huge logs, each with the upper and lower ends of the tree trunk facing in opposite directions in order to level the pitch of the roof.

There is a wooden double-hung window with 2/2 lights on the east, north and south sides of the rectangular pen. The windows measure about 32 inches high and about 14 inches wide. The walls of the rectangular pen measure about 6-1/2 feet at the corners. The rectangular pen consists of one room.

The plank roof of the cabin is now covered with asbestos shingles. The logs of the shed roofed additions at the rear of the rectangular pen are not attached to the logs of the pen. They simply rest firmly against the walls of the original cabin. Another interesting feature of log construction is the chinking with large, squarish pieces of wood between the logs in vertical courses on either side of the windows and doors of the rectangular pen, to support the weight of the heavy logs.

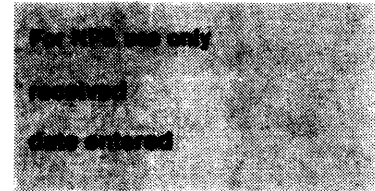
The cabin is in good condition. It is now used for storage.

8. Significance: The Sylvester M. (Vet) Mallette Cabin is significant both architecturally and historically. It is significant architecturally as a good example of a pioneer building type of the settlement years of the mining town of Red River. It is said to be the oldest building in Red River and the first to be constructed by the first permanent settlers in 1882. It is significant historically by association with its builder/owner, Sylvester M. (Vet) Mallette, a pioneer settler of the town.

Architecturally, the cabin is a good example of the rectangular single pen with "shed room" additions in log. The rectangular single pen was first introduced into the Middle Atlantic colonies by Scotch-Irish and Germans. Typically, the rectangular pen has a front and rear wall dimension exceeding that of the side walls by five feet or more. The front wall of this cabin exceeds the side walls by 11 feet, 4 inches.

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Taos County, Red River  
Red River Multiple Resource Area

Mallette, Sylvester M. (Vet), Cabin (Red River Multiple Resource Area)

This cabin is also an important example of the "shed room" addition in log construction. These additions were usually made in materials other than log because of the difficulty of attaching a new log wall to an existing one. The name "shed room" is derived from the single-slope shed roof of these lean-to additions. Shed rooms originated in England. They are most common in western England and are thought to have been introduced from that region to the Chesapeake Tidewater.

Other significant features of log construction exhibited in this cabin are the squared-wood chinking in vertical courses flanking openings, used to support the weight of the logs, and the large double ridge poles. According to local tradition, the ridge poles were "rolled up into place" by chains pulled by horses.

This cabin is said to be the oldest structure in Red River, and the original dwelling constructed by the earliest permanent settlers, Sylvester, Orin and George Mallette and Edward Westoby, when they arrived in the valley to trap beaver in 1882. It is said to have been originally constructed on the northeast side of the valley, near the present location of the Edward Westoby Cabin and the Red River Miners' Hospital-Westoby House (see separate continuation sheets). When "Red River City" was platted in 1895, existing structures that did not conform to the grid pattern of streets were moved. A number of lots in this block were acquired by Sylvester Mallette and he moved the cabin to this location to serve as his home. He chose this site because of the location of a spring a few yards to the west of the cabin. According to local tradition, the logs of the cabin were not dismantled when it was moved. The cabin is said to have mounted on wagon wheels and hauled by horses to the new site. The shed room additions may have been added at this time, or shortly thereafter.

Sylvester Mallette was a Union Veteran of the Civil War, and he went by the nickname of Vet. He is listed in the 1900 census as a 56-year-old single miner of gold and silver, born in 1844 in New York. He also served as a justice of the peace. In 1901, his brother Orin, and sister-in-law, Julia, granted him an undivided half interest in the Willow Placer Mining Claim at the west end of the valley. Orin operated a blacksmith shop on a lot just north of Vet's cabin.

The property on which the cabin is located was acquired in the 1920s by the Robert Prunty family, which is still in ownership of the cabin. The cabin served as their home until recent years. It is now used for storage.

10. Geographical Data: The nominated property consists of Lots 24 and 25 in Block 300 of the Red River Townsite. A portion of the rear of Lot 25 is occupied by a portion of a house trailer. It is a non-contributing structure.

Quadrangle name: Red River  
Quadrangle scale: 7.5 minute

UTM References:  
Zone 13 Easting 463940 Northing 4062080