

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED APR 28 1976

DATE ENTERED OCT 29 1976

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC ******
Beecher Island Battleground

AND/OR COMMON
Beecher Island Battleground Memorial

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
Beecher Road, 11 1/2 miles from junction with Colorado 385. NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN 16 1/2 miles SE of Wray. CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
SE of Wray James P. Johnson, District 04

STATE Colorado CODE 08 COUNTY Yuma CODE 125 ~~115~~

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: Community Center

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Beecher Island Battleground Memorial Association, Inc.

STREET & NUMBER
c/o Troil Welton

CITY, TOWN SE of Wray VICINITY OF STATE Colorado

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Yuma County Register of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER
Yuma County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN Wray STATE Colorado

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Colorado State Inventory of Historic Sites

DATE February 10, 1976 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS State Historical Society of Colorado, 200 East 14th Avenue

CITY, TOWN Denver STATE Colorado

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Battle of Beecher Island was fought along the Arickaree Fork of the Republican River with concentrated fighting on a small island. A few willow trees stood on the island; however, the banks on either side of the river were believed to have had minimal tree growth. Bluffs rise gently from the course of the river. The physical appearance of the actual battleground site was changed by a flood in 1935 which altered the river channel. A monument, erected in 1905, was swept from the island and virtually all traces of the island were destroyed. The major pieces of the monument were retrieved and have been erected on the north side of the river, overlooking picnic and camping grounds.

The Beecher Island Battleground Memorial Association owns 240 acres of pasture land and river bottom land where the battle occurred. The semi-arid climate supports native grasses, sagebrush, scrubs, and trees along the river bank. Near the monument are an auditorium built in the 1940's, a Sunday School building, a kitchen hall, a one-room school house, modern showers and rest rooms, and a storage shed. Evergreen trees have been planted around the auditorium.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
	<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

Great Plains Indian
History

SPECIFIC DATES September 17-26, 1868 BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Numerous treaties between the Great Plains Indian tribes and the United States Government had been written and broken as homesteaders continued the westward movement in the 1860's. The Cheyenne, Arapahoe, and Sioux Indians were alarmed at the shrinking size of the hunting grounds that they had been promised. No great concerted raids were staged by the Indians, only sporadic ones on trails and settlements between 1864-1868.

Major George "Sandy" Forsyth, a thirty-one year old U. S. Cavalry officer, had been commissioned to enlist fifty frontiersmen as scouts to track the Indians in revenge. On the afternoon of September 16, 1868, the scouts spotted a fresh Indian trail. During the day, Sioux scouts had alerted their warriors of the imminent danger. Among the Indians camped near the Arickaree Fork in the Republican River was the celebrated Roman Nose, a reputable Indian leader in war. As nightfall approached, the Forsyth scouts staked camp on the south side of the Arickaree Fork near a low, narrow island covered with grass, scrubs, and small trees. Toward dawn of the following day, a small band of Indian scouts accidentally happened onto the camp. Immediately, fighting ensued with reinforcements coming from the nearby Indian camps. Forsyth hurriedly organized a defense to move to the island where rifle pits were hastily dug. Six of the scouts were killed and fifteen, including Forsyth, were seriously injured. The Indians were held in battle for nine days while scouts fled the battle scene by night to return to Fort Wallace for help.

Roman Nose, the Indian warrior, had remained in camp during the opening hours of the battle. The magic of his special war bonnet had been broken recently. The long ritual to restore his invulnerability in battle had not been performed. Nevertheless, Roman Nose had ridden to the bluffs to survey the reports of heavy Indian losses and was urged to lead a charge against the island. He was immediately assaulted by rifle fire. The number of total Indian losses was highly disputed; however, the dwindling power of the various semi-united tribes has been attributed to the death of their warrior, Roman Nose, during this battle.

The island was named in honor of Lieutenant Fred Beecher, who was killed during the engagement.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Members of the Potomac Corral of the Westerners, Great Western Indian Fights, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebraska, 1960. pp.165-174.
- Debo, A., A History of the Indians of the United States, University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, Oklahoma, 1970. pp. 189-190.
- Matson, S., The Beecher Island Annual, Beecher Island Battle Memorial Association, Wray, Colorado, 1960. pp.111-114.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 160 Acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	13	7412100	441174810	B	13	7412810	441164410
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	13	7399910	441164010	D	13	7399915	441174410
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Township 2, South Range, 42 West
 Section 21 - NE $\frac{1}{4}$ (160 acres); NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ (40 acres)
 Section 22 - SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ (40 acres)

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
Colorado	08	Yuma	145
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Charlotte Shoup Olsen

Human Resource Coordinator

ORGANIZATION

Northeastern Colorado Council of Governments

DATE

February 10, 1976

STREET & NUMBER

Yuma County Courthouse

TELEPHONE

(303) 332-4850

CITY OR TOWN

Wray

STATE

Colorado: 80758

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Stephen H. Hunt

TITLE

S.H.P.O.

DATE

4/11/76

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST: DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

10/29/76

DATE

10/26/75

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER