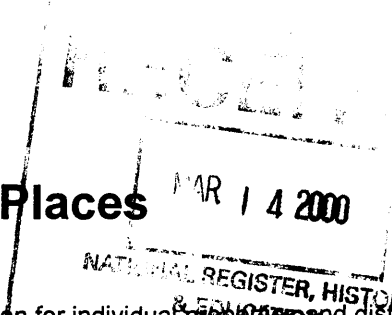


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form



367

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determination for individual properties and districts. See instruction 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 Surface Creek Livestock Company Silos

other names/site number Bar I Ranch Silos; 5DT1013

2. Location

street & number 315 SW 3rd Street [N/A] not for publication

city or town Cedaredge [N/A] vicinity

state Colorado code CO county Delta code 029 zip code 81413

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 [ ] nationally [ ] statewide [x] locally. ([ ] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Georganna Contezuela State Historic Preservation Officer March 8, 2000  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State Historic Preservation Office, Colorado Historical Society  
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  
[ ] See continuation sheet.

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Debbie D. Herd 4/27/00  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Surface Creek Livestock Company Silos

Delta County, Colorado

Name of Property

County/State

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

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not count previously listed resources.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
--------------	-----------------	--

0	0	buildings
0	0	sites
3	0	structures
0	0	objects
3	0	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.

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Function

(Enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURE/storage

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE/museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: Stacked lumber

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete  
walls wood  
roof tin  
other

Narrative Description

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

Surface Creek Livestock Company Silos  
Name of Property

Delta County, Colorado  
County/State

## 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.)

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)

Engineering

### Periods of Significance

1916-1917

### Significant Dates

### Significant Person(s)

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

### Architect/Builder

James, Robert Phelps

### Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Colorado Historical Society

Surface Creek Livestock Company Silos  
Name of Property

Delta County, Colorado  
County/State

## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** less than one

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1. 13 246330 4309450  
Zone Easting Northing

3. Zone Easting Northing

2. Zone Easting Northing

4. Zone Easting Northing

[ ] See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kathryn A. Morris (Edited by S. Doggett)

organization Surface Creek Valley Historical Society date November 1, 1999

street & number 5561 Kingsbriar Drive telephone 714-970-1542

city or town Yorba Linda state CA zip code 92886

## 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

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Surface Creek Valley Historical Society

street & number P.O. Box 906 telephone 970-856-7554

city or town Cedaredge state CO zip code 81413

**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.)

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Surface Creek Livestock Company Silos  
Delta County, Colorado

Section number 7 Page 1

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**DESCRIPTION**

The three Surface Creek Livestock Company Silos remain at their original location on land that was part of the former headquarters of the Surface Creek Livestock Company in Cedaredge, Colorado. Cedaredge is located along Colorado Highway 65, which is also known as Colorado's Grand Mesa Scenic and Historic Byway. Cedaredge's Pioneer Town, an approximately seven acre historic park owned and operated by the Surface Creek Valley Historical Society, now includes the silos within its boundaries. The park includes a number of moved and recreated buildings associated with the area's history.

The three silos are in good condition and reflect a high degree of integrity of workmanship, materials, and design. The silos are of 2 by 6 inch stacked lumber construction. Two, built in 1916, are nine-sided and measure 17 feet 6 inches at the base. The eastern-most silo, measuring 18 feet 6 inches at the base, is eleven-sided and was built in 1917. Each is approximately 29 feet in height to the eaves and 35 feet to the top of its roof top finial. The nine and eleven-sided hipped roofs are tin. Each silo has a capacity of 200 tons. A series of wood platforms and ladders join the three structures, providing access to the interiors through a series of chutes with wood doors.

**Alterations and Restoration**

In 1981, after acquiring the silos, the Surface Creek Valley Historical Society removed the lower connecting platforms and ladders for safety reasons and encased the base of each silo in concrete in an attempt at stabilization. The Surface Creek Livestock Company Silos were listed in the Colorado State Register of Historic Properties on November 9, 1994. By then, the original concrete lining of each silo was almost all eroded.

In 1998, concerned over further deterioration, the Surface Creek Valley Historical Society submitted a grant application to the Colorado State Historical Fund (SHF) Subsequently, SHF grant #99-01-063, in the amount of \$46,500, provided part of the funding required to stabilize, preserve, and restore the silos. The work was completed in 1999, following the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.

As part of the project, engineering studies were conducted, and architectural plans and specifications were drawn. The interior walls were stripped and cleaned, and the concrete floors were removed. After excavating the perimeters, the silos were raised and leveled. A house moving firm utilized steel beams, wood platforms, and hydraulic jacks to lift and hold the silos while the foundations were repaired. The original rubble foundation and rotted wood base were removed. New masonry included the forming and pouring of concrete foundations, utilizing rebar and anchor bolts; the installation of concrete block below grade; the application of rubble stone veneer to the foundation above grade, and the pouring of new concrete floors.

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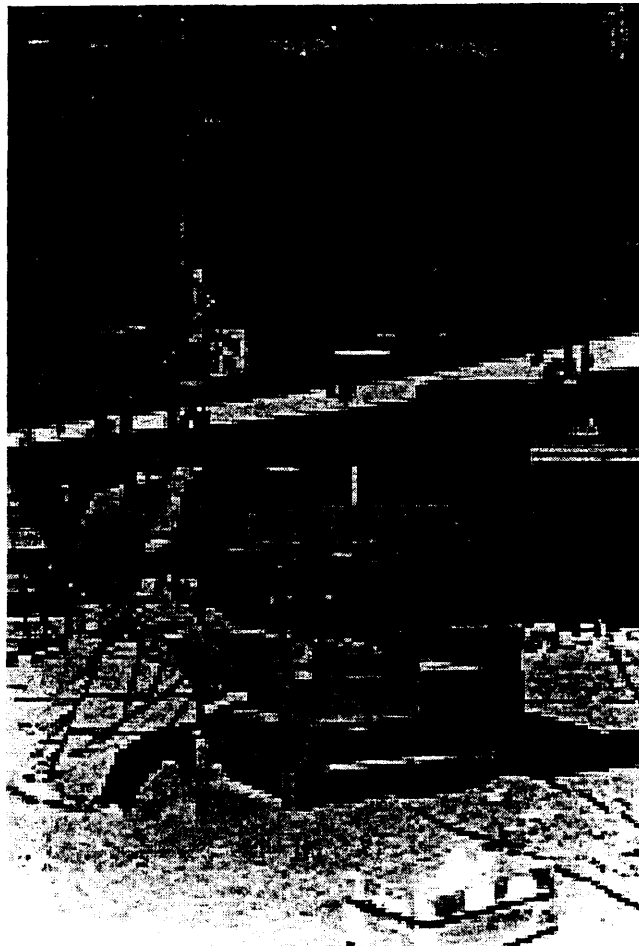
Surface Creek Livestock Company Silos  
Delta County, Colorado

Section number 7 Page 2

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Other work included the repair and sealing of the tin roof panels; installation of the antique cupola roof vents; renovation of platform, chutes, and ladders to match historic photos; and the installation of antique hardware latches, hinges, and handles. Rooftop finials were fabricated using the only remaining original one as a pattern. A 50/50 mix of linseed oil and mineral spirits was sprayed on the exterior, and new redwood sill plates were sanded and sealed to match existing wood.

**Silo Restoration  
1998**



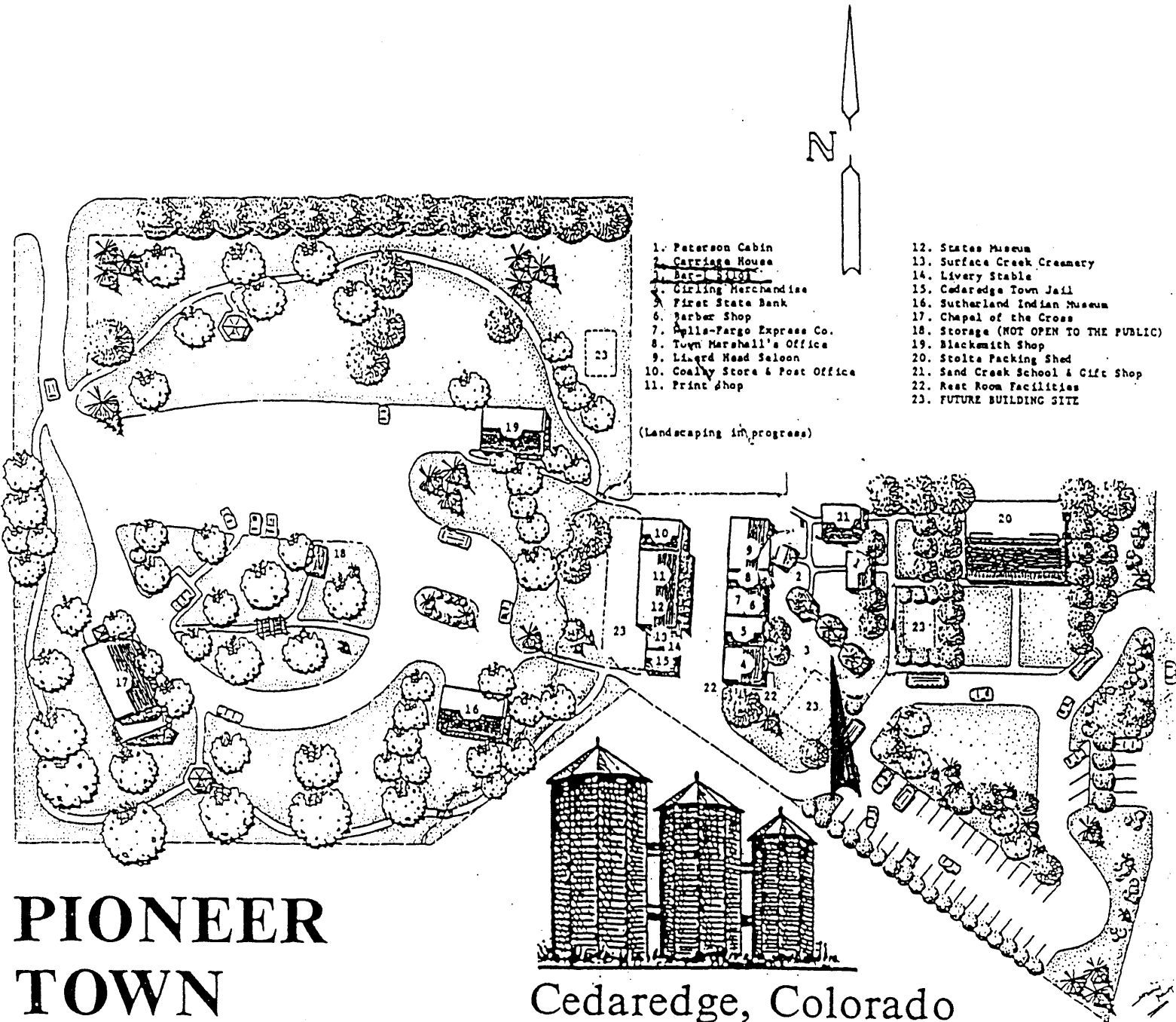
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Surface Creek Livestock Company Silos  
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SITE PLAN



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Surface Creek Livestock Company Silos  
Delta County, Colorado

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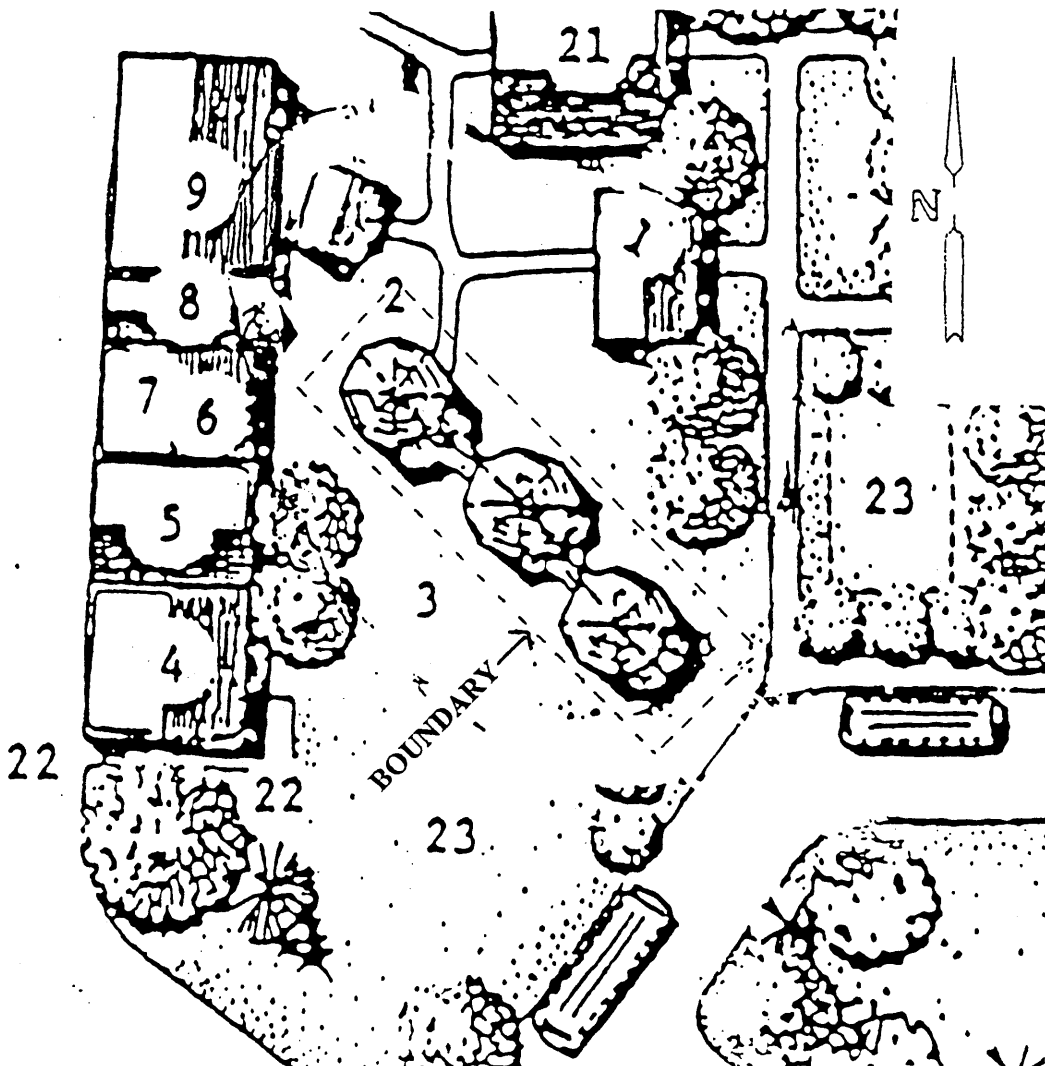
GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description

The nomination boundaries include the footprint of the three silos and a rectangle of land 10' out from the edge of the footprint as indicated on the following sketch map.

Boundary Justification

The nomination includes only that part of the land historically associated with the silos retaining its historic integrity.





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Surface Creek Livestock Company Silos  
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**SIGNIFICANCE**

The Surface Creek Livestock Company Silos are eligible for the National Register under Criterion C in the area of Engineering. Although the setting has been altered, the silos exhibit integrity of design, workmanship, and materials. They remain excellent intact examples of stacked lumber construction, utilizing an extremely rare nine-sided and eleven-sided silo plan. In addition, their long-term use and overall good condition, even prior to their recent restoration, attests to the sound utilitarian nature of this method of construction

**Stacked Lumber Construction**

Large storage structures, such as grain elevators, silos, and coal bins, require exterior walls with sufficient strength to withstand the tremendous outward pressures produced by their contents. One construction technique devised to meet these structural requirements is the stacked lumber or cribbed construction method. Walls are most often constructed with 2 x 10s, 2 x 8s, 2 x 6s, or 2 x 4s laid flat in a rectangle or square. Sometimes a progression of increasingly smaller lumber is used with the largest dimensions on the bottom. The planks are held together with large metal spikes. The walls interlock like logs in cabin construction. The resulting form, while using a large amount of lumber, is extremely strong.

Grain elevators were commonly constructed with the stacked lumber technique in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Though extremely strong, the structures were susceptible to fire. The average life span of a wood elevator was only eleven years. Most wood elevators are covered with metal siding as a fire preventive measure. The metal siding does little to increase life expectancy and makes identification of the stacked lumber construction technique difficult for the casual observer.

The multi-sided design of Surface Creek Livestock Company Silos is particularly intriguing. A simple square or rectangle would have been easier to build. However, a round or nearly round structure distributes the outward force to more planks of shorter length, thus increasing the overall strength of the structure. The wider angle of the interior corners also eases the cleaning out of the silos, a particularly useful characteristic with partially decomposed silage. The eleven-sided silo constructed in 1917, following the successful use of the nine-sided version built the year before, increased the strength of the original design. The concrete lining added additional strength and also served to protect the exterior lumber from the moisture in the silage.

Typically, a steam engine, cutter, and lengths of pipes were employed to fill silos. The cutter chopped up the harvested crops, such as corn and sunflowers, and the engine blew the silage through the pipes into the silos. A man on the inside of the silo constantly tramped down the silage as the structure filled. Lengths of pipe were added as necessary to fill the contents to the top. Men worked inside the silos for shifts not much longer than two hours. The fermenting silage produced an alcoholic haze that affected those in close contact with it. The series of wood doors on the side of the silos were used to unload the

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Surface Creek Livestock Company Silos  
Delta County, Colorado

Section number 8 , Page 5

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contents. Silage was forked out by hand and pitched to waiting wagons below. The ladder and platform arrangement allowed workers to move easily between levels and silos during the dispensing process.

While stacked lumber grain elevators are relatively common in many agricultural regions of the United States, silos constructed with this method are quite rare. The Surface Creek Livestock Company Silos are a particularly intact example of the technique at its finest. There are no other known examples within Delta County or the surrounding Western Slope region. The silos remain a prominent visual landmark within the community and serve as the emblem of the Surface Creek Historical Society and Pioneer Town.

### Historical Background

The silos, the Bar I Ranch, and the town of Cedaredge are very much intertwined. Fred Leonard homesteaded the land that is part of the town of Cedaredge and sold it to Pierre Settle on September 21, 1885. Settle's land became the nucleus of the Bar I Ranch (pronounced Bar Eye). In November of that year he sold the land to a group of men known as the Surface Creek Livestock Company and Mr. Henry Kohler took over management.

It was a large ranch with 600 acres in alfalfa, 2,000 to 3,000 tons of hay and thousands of cattle running on Grand Mesa in the summer. Henry Kohler and his wife Sophia had a home on the spread, and in 1894 when Mrs. Sam (Kate) Lovett applied for the first postmaster job, Sophia suggested to Kate that the town be named Cedar Edge. It has been said that the reason for this suggestion was that the area was located at the edge of stands of cedars. The two words were combined and thus the town of Cedaredge was on the map.

In 1905, the *West Slope* reported that the ranch had been sold to W. B. and A.W. Stockham and James Zaninetti. The Stockham Brothers offered ten acres for building sites for the town. The ranch changed hands several times, but in 1916 the Stockham Brothers retained title and began to build the silos. The Surface Creek Champion on August 11, 1916 stated, "Work was started last week by R. P. James on two monster silos for the Stockham ranch at Cedaredge. *The West Slope* newspaper noted on September 22, 1916 that, "The two big silos on the Bar I Ranch south of town were filled this week. The operation was an attraction to many to whom it was entirely novel." On August 24, 1917 the paper stated that, "Another 200 ton silo is being constructed on the old Bar I ranch south of town by the Stockham Brothers. Their experiments of last season were so satisfactory with the two already built that more are found necessary."

Silos represent one aspect of a "revolution" that occurred in American agriculture after 1875. The idea of cutting green fodder and storing it in an airtight building or pit, thereby allowing it to ferment to increase its palatability and usefulness for animal feed, was probably introduced into this country from Germany. The first silo in the United States is believed to have been erected circa 1873 in McHenry County, Illinois (Noble).

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Surface Creek Livestock Company Silos  
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Above and below ground silos were used in Colorado in the early part of the 20th century. Below ground types included the pit, bank, and trench silos. Above ground types included the homemade stave, patent stave, tung-lok, wooden-hooped, Wisconsin, Gurler, "common-sense", and concrete silos. There were failures in all types of silos, but fewer were associated with concrete silos than most other types (Dvorachek). The concrete lined stacked lumber silos constructed on the Bar I Ranch by Robert P. James are a combination of the "common-sense" silo and the concrete silo.

Often "common-sense" silos utilized an octagonal plan, forming a rounded structure that maximized strength. They were constructed out of two by fours that were laid flat and nailed, with the ends overlapping. The inside surface was usually coated with tar pitch or covered with tar felt. The main fault of the "common-sense" silo was excessive shrinkage that caused cracks to open and break the inside coating. The cost was high unless poor grades of lumber were used, and some photographs show them with only six sides (Dvorachek). A surviving circa 1920 octagonal example was recently recorded on the Emil Anderson property (5BL7258) in Boulder County.

Concrete silos were a favorite of the time in Colorado because it was thought that anyone with ordinary intelligence, utilizing unskilled labor and a little advice or aid, could construct one. In addition, concrete silos were the least expensive type to build that were suitable for the Colorado climate (Dvorachek).

**Builder - Robert P. James (1876-1963)**

When the Stockham Brothers decided to add two silos to their ranch in 1916, they turned to local builder, Robert (Bob) P. James. James came to Cedaredge in 1901, and the quality of area buildings improved markedly after his arrival. While the reasons behind the choice of stacked lumber construction for these particular silos are unknown, the quality of the workmanship seems to indicate that these were not James' first experiments with the technique, and this workmanship most likely contributed to their survival. Due to the suitability of concrete for the Colorado climate and the problem of shrinkage associated with the "common-sense" silo, one might deduce that James used a combination of the two to create a superior silo that would survive Colorado winters.

James, one of the early settlers of the Surface Creek Valley, was well-known for his excellent carpentry skills acquired in Missouri before he moved to Colorado. Born on March 10, 1876 in Joplin, Missouri, he came to the valley in 1901 to visit his uncle, William S. Pickett, and liked the area so much he decided to stay. He met his future wife, Ethel Hart, soon after his arrival, and they were married on September 25, 1907 (Hazel).

When James arrived in 1901, on an immigrant rail car shared with livestock, supplies, etc., most of the buildings in the area were crudely built and looked "homemade" rather than professional. James either built or assisted with the construction of many local buildings that remain in use today, including the former Brooks Service Station, the Drug Store, the former VanArms Variety, Graham's Cedaredge Furniture, the Apple Bowl, the Mesa Theatre, the Cedaredge Café and Hotel, the Dry Goods Store, and numerous residences. Through the efforts of James, the first bridge was built over Surface Creek as

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Surface Creek Livestock Company Silos  
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were the Cedar Mesa and Reed schools. In 1906, when James and W.W. Sackett laid out the present Cedar Mesa Grade, utilizing a carpenter's level and a 16-foot board, the local people turned out in mass, forming the grade by hand until it was wide enough for the horse drawn county grader to continue the work. (Hazel).

The February 11, 1954 edition of the *Surface Creek News* noted other activities associated with James and members of his family. He became the president of the Cedaredge Lumber Company in 1916 and remained in that position for about 10 years before serving in other capacities. He was appointed postmaster in August 1933 and retired in 1948. James prided himself on his perfect attendance, reportedly having never took as much as an hour off for sick leave. In addition, James owned and operated an insurance business and was also very active in civic affairs, serving as a member of the Cedaredge Town Council for many years. For a short time after the sheriff, Willis Davis was killed in the line of duty, he served as deputy sheriff. Two of his daughters, Margaret L. Mills and Lela C. Aust also became postmasters. Lela held the post from September 1948 to March 1972, and Margaret held the post from July 1976 to October 1979.



**Bob James**  
**1904**

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National Park Service

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PHOTOGRAPH LOG

The following information pertains to photograph numbers 1-8, except as noted:

Name of property: Surface Creek Livestock Company Silos  
Location: 315 SW 3rd St., Cedaredge, Delta County, Colorado  
Photographer: Kathryn A. Morris  
Date of photographs: August 7, 1999  
Location of negatives: 5561 Kingsbriar Drive  
Yorba Linda, CA 92886

<u>Photo No.</u>	<u>Information</u>
1	View north, 1950s, unknown photographer.
2	View northwest, with other Pioneer Town buildings.
3	View to above , from interior of most westerly silo.
4	View north, with connecting walkways.
5	View northwest.
6	View southwest, showing detail typical of platforms, ladders, and door openings.
7	View northwest.
8	View northeast, 10/1998, <i>Delta County Independent</i> photograph, negative retained by newspaper.

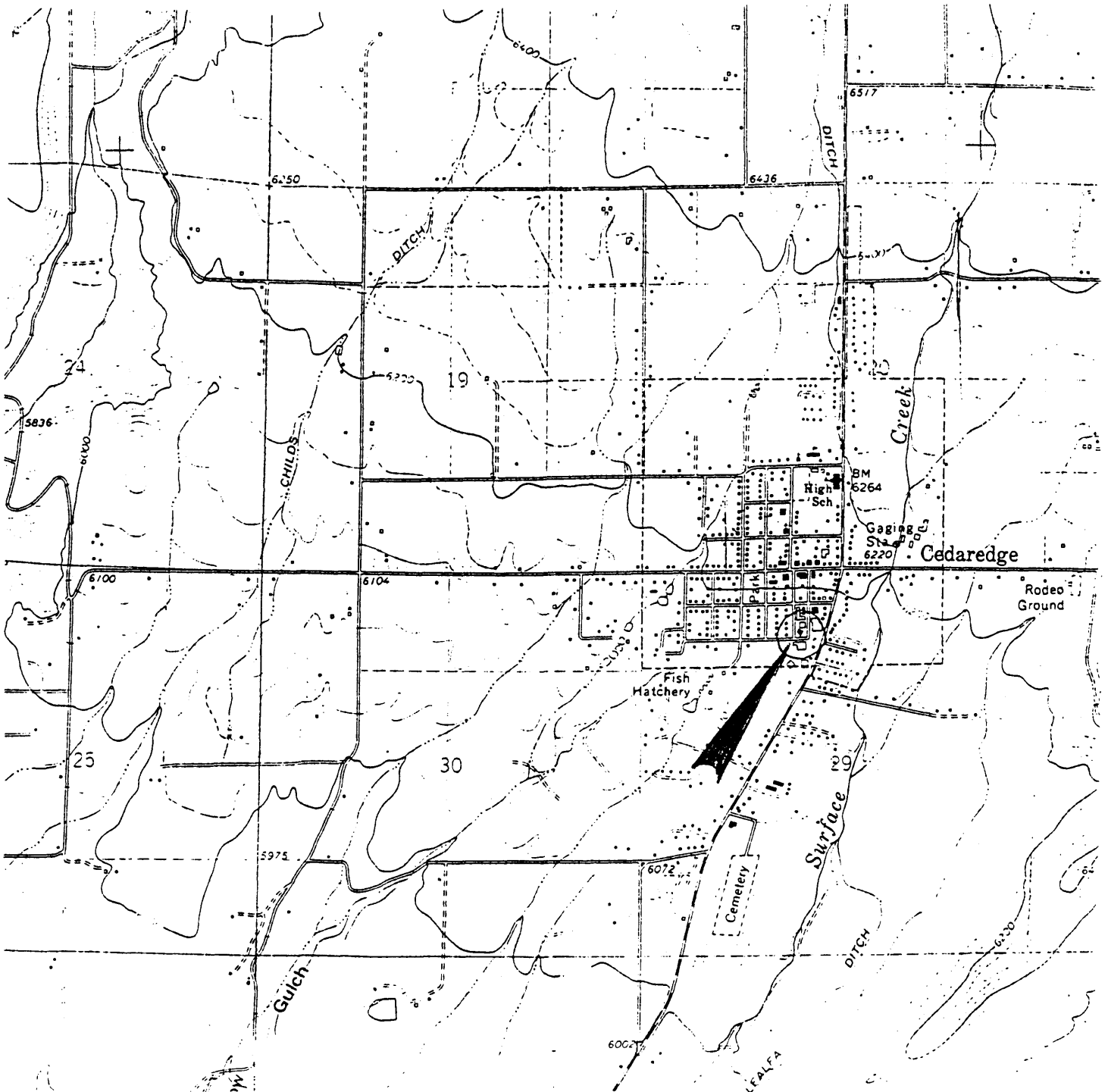
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USGS MAP  
Cedaredge, CO





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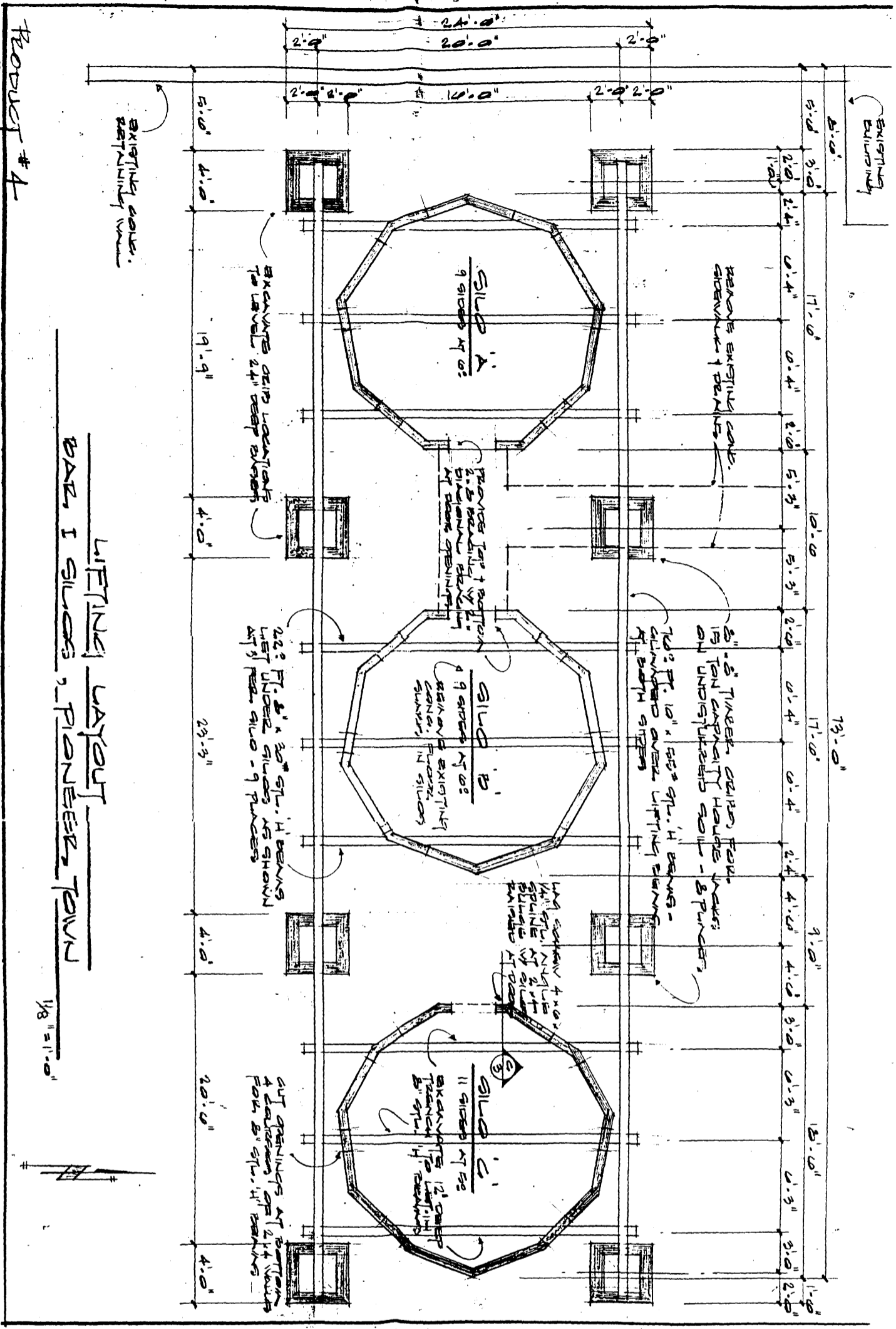


FIGURE # 4

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Surface Creek Livestock Company Silos  
Delta County, Colorado

