

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NOV 2007

1324

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 any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable". For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. 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 Saddle Club
Other names/site number NeHBS# SF11-469

2. Location

Street & number 2000 West Overland / PO Box 204 Not for publication
City or town Scottsbluff Vicinity
State Nebraska Code NE County Scotts Bluff Code 157 Zip code 69361

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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.)

Michael J. Smith
Signature of certifying official

Nov 7, 2007
Date

Director, Nebraska State 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 this 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 R. Beall 12-27-07

[Signature]
Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

Saddle Club

Name of Property

Scotts Bluff County, Nebraska

County and 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 include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
3	2	Buildings
		Sites
4	1	Structures
		Objects
7	3	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 Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- SOCIAL / clubhouse
- RECREATION AND CULTURE/sports facility
- RECREATION AND CULTURE/outdoor recreation

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- SOCIAL / clubhouse
- RECREATION AND CULTURE/sports facility
- RECREATION AND CULTURE/outdoor recreation

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- No style

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- Foundation Concrete slab
- Walls Brick tile
- Roof Asphalt
- Other

Narrative Description

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

Saddle Club

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- A** Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** Removed from its original location.
- C** A birthplace or a 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.)

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ENTERTAINMENT / RECREATION

SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

1949 - 1957

Significant Dates

1949

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

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 # _____

Primary location for additional data:

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

Saddle Club

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10. Geographical DataAcreage of property 9.25

UTM References (place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet).

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1.	13	608496	4634580	3.			
2.				4.			

[] 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 Stacy Stupka-Burda / National Register Coordinator
 organization Nebraska State Historical Society date 7/12/07
 street & number 1500 R Street, PO Box 82554 telephone 402-471-4770
 city or town Lincoln state NE zip code 68501-2554

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 the SHPO or FPO.)

name/title Saddle Club
 street & number PO Box 204 telephone _____
 city or town Scottsbluff state NE zip code 69361

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determined 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, (15 USC 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the 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 Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Saddle Club

Name of Property

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The Saddle Club is located in Scottsbluff, Nebraska, the largest community in Nebraska's Panhandle (2000 Pop. 14,732) approximately 400 miles west of Lincoln, the Nebraska state capital, and approximately 100 miles northeast of Cheyenne, the Wyoming state capital. The Saddle Club is located at the western edge of Scottsbluff, just about three tenths of a mile north of the North Platte River. The North Platte River forms the northern boundary of Scotts Bluff National Monument which rises majestically from the valley floor just south of this historic property.

Established in 1947, the Saddle Club is situated on 9.25 acres of land vegetated primarily with native grasses. A few trees are also present. Contributing buildings and structures include a clubhouse, three arenas, a round pen, and two horse barns. A small pump house, a horse barn, and an announcer's booth are noncontributing due to age or lack of integrity.

Three south-facing horse barns are situated just inside the entrance to the Saddle Club. The northeastern-most wood plank barn is positioned right inside the fence line and contains nine horse stalls. This barn likely dates to the mid-1960's, and therefore, due to its age, is considered noncontributing. A fifteen stall, 150 ft horse barn is situated directly in front of the wood plank horse barn. A second nine stall horse barn is located west of and across the driveway from the fifteen stall barn. These barns are former Scottsbluff Army Air Field barracks and were purchased at auction by the Saddle Club in 1950. These barracks turned horse barns are now covered with corrugated tin on all sides and on the roof. A small, noncontributing gable roofed pump house sits in front of the larger horse barn. This small pump house is covered with split logs and its construction date falls outside the period of significance.

Moving southwest along the driveway toward the clubhouse, warm up arenas and pens are visible. A trail arena is located near the eastern boundary of the site, the south end of which opens into catch pens on the east end of the show arena. The show arena is the largest arena on site, and certainly serves as a focal area. An announcer's booth, or "crow's nest" is present along the north west end of the show arena. The announcer's booth is covered in new metal siding and is noncontributing. A warm-up arena, and a round pen are located on the west side of the driveway. The round pen has a deep sand base conducive to working with horses in training.

The clay tile brick clubhouse is positioned at the end of the driveway. Constructed in 1949, this building features vertically placed wood planks with scalloped ends in each gable. The floor plan of this unpretentious building is rectangular, and when constructed measured 24 x 48 feet. In 1956, an addition measuring 22 feet was constructed on the west end of the clubhouse to accommodate restrooms and a kitchen. Double doors complete with screen doors form the main entrance on the east façade. These pine double doors feature divided light windows. The south façade has five windows, four that are covered by sliding wood panels and one that is comprised of glass block. The north façade has two windows, also covered by wood. The addition of the wood panels over the windows is a relatively new feature and was added for protection from vandals. The interior of the clubhouse is open to facilitate club meetings. A brick fireplace with a wooden mantel is centered along the north wall of the building. A serving window with countertop located at the rear of the meeting space allows ready access to the kitchen.

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The Saddle Club in Scottsbluff is eligible at the local level under Criterion A in the areas of Social History and Entertainment/Recreation. Established in 1947, the Saddle Club was the first organized equestrian club in the area. Established to promote horseback riding, better horsemanship, horse shows and a safe riding experience, the Saddle Club quickly became an important community institution.

The Saddle Club in Scottsbluff was established in September 1947 after several Scottsbluff area residents and horse owners attended a horse show in nearby Bridgeport. The official organization name "Saddle Club" was selected at this time, as were officers and Board members. Organized as a riding club plans were immediately initiated to host a spring horse show.¹ The first meeting of the Saddle Club was held on September 11th, and by September 21st, the newspaper reported that not only had the first picnic had been held the previous day, but over 75 active members were enrolled.² At this first picnic, 56 riders participated, and "more than that many riding fans in cars" assembled at a member's farm to enjoy a chuck wagon style Italian dinner.³

Within the month, the Saddle Club sponsored a contest at the Midwest Theater (NRHP 1997) to choose a contestant to reign as queen at the 49th annual American Royal Livestock and Horse Show held in Kansas City.⁴ Representation at this prestigious national livestock and horse show undoubtedly served not only to add legitimacy to the new club, but also provided a platform to encourage local participation and enthusiasm for the Saddle Club.

In October of that year, Saddle Club members traveled to Fort Robinson (NHL 1966) where they were entertained by officers and enlisted men. Horses were then furnished for those members who wished to ride over the surrounding countryside. A picnic followed.⁵ Formal establishment of this relationship became important later that year when the Secretary of War ordered America's remount service disbanded and that all stallions and property be disposed. The Saddle Club urged its members to participate in a letter writing campaign to Nebraska State Senator Kenneth Wherry urging Fort Robinson's breeding program be maintained.⁶ By January the following year, the Saddle Club was circulating a petition urging support of the breeding program at Fort Robinson. Local horse enthusiasts and Saddle Club members were quoted in national publications emphasizing how important the breeding program at Fort Robinson was to small breeders and local ranchers to improve the blood lines of their stock. Proving that the voice of the public is important, Saddle Club members received a Western Union telegram on April 8, 1948 stating

Glad to inform you Senate today passed our bill to transfer remount service and Fort Robinson to Department of Agriculture where breeding program will be continued. Confident that President will sign bill and transfer will be effected within next few days. Hugh Butler USS Nebraska.⁷

¹ Scottsbluff Star-Herald, September 10, 1947.

² Ibid. September 21, 1947.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., September and October issues.

⁵ Unless otherwise noted, documentation is taken from a compiled history of the Saddle Club by club historian Alberta Conklin.

⁶ Scottsbluff Star-Herald, December 8, 1947.

⁷ Western Union Telegram, compiled history of the Saddle Club.

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Though the Saddle Club still had no consistent place for the Club to call home, they continued to meet regularly and to plan for their first horse show. By late January 1948, the Club voted to adopt an official creed as their own. Adapted from "A Trail Rider's Creed" the text is as follows:

A Trail Rider's Creed

As a Trail Rider, I will recognize the following obligations: To my mount—those considerations known as good horsemanship. To my fellow riders—those common courtesies of the right of way, which provide for the safety of others. To Society—never to perform any act of destruction or neglect.

I will remember: That a cigarette may be down but is never out. Fire is one of our best friends, yet our worst enemy. That fences were erected both to keep animals in and out; and that the gates therein must be kept as the owner desires. That signs are erected for our safety and guidance and must be observed.⁸

Already proving itself to be an active and concerned member of the community, with the adoption of this creed, the Saddle Club stepped into providing a framework for and encouraging behavior that reinforced the social mores of the community.

The first Saddle Club horse show was held in June of 1948. The show was well attended by nearly 3,000 spectators, but Club members were disappointed by the quality of horses offered for sale, netting only \$169 from the auction of horses. Overall, however, the first horse show was deemed a success, earning a total of \$651.69 for the Club.

Throughout preparations for their first horse show, club members were busy trying to find property that would fit the growing needs of their club. In November 1948, club minutes report that the purchase of land was complete, with the assistance of a loan from club member L.B. Murphy. Plans to build a shelter house were immediately discussed. Two months later, in January of 1949, plans for a permanent structure had grown from a shelter house to a brick tile building.⁹ While planning for the construction of their new building, club members were also planning the second annual horse show, and were also making plans and sponsoring participation in a horse show circuit. This circuit included cities in Nebraska and Colorado. In March, the local newspaper reported on the Club's progress regarding completion of their new building, and also mentioned that the club had grown to 250 members. The Star-Herald also stated that the "formation of this club is rather outstanding".

The Saddle Club met in their new brick tile clubhouse for the first time on April 15, 1949. Later that month, a Grand Opening which featured square dancing was held at the new clubhouse. The Saddle Club continued to participate and sponsor community wide events, partnering with groups such as the Scottsbluff Chamber of Commerce and organizers of a reenactment of a Pony Express ride. The Saddle Club ended this second very active year, however, with a deficit of \$93.76. Club members were contacted to solicit funds to cancel all outstanding indebtedness.

Beginning 1950 with low coffers, the Club still felt it was important to move forward and to improve their arena grounds. Plans for lighting were made, and the Club was able to purchase two Scotts Bluff Army Airfield barracks at auction for use as stables. The need for stables became more pressing in May of that year, when the City of Scottsbluff passed an

⁸ Compiled history of the Saddle Club, meeting minutes.

⁹ Ibid.

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ordinance prohibiting the stabling of horses within the city limits. It was during this year that bleachers were installed, as was wire fence surrounding the area. The wire fence was loaned to the Saddle Club by the Platte Valley Tile and Cement Company for use by the Club until the cement company came to take it down. Club notes indicate that this was a great savings to the club in terms of time and effort because they did not have to return the fence. However, club member Alberta Conklin might not have agreed that time and effort was in fact saved. Mrs. Conklin was given the job of weaving a three inch wide piece of material through the wire the entire distance of the arena fence to insure that the horses could see the fence. It took over 30 yards of material, torn in strips and sewn to complete this monumental task.

The Saddle Club continued to sponsor their annual horse show, participated in circuit horse shows, planned day long rides as well as overnight rides for members, and candidates for queen at the annual American Royal Livestock and Horse Show. Their membership grew and continued to impact the local community in numerous ways. Square dance clubs were organized, members participated in parades, and created performance drill teams and roping clubs. Throughout the club's history, horsemanship and the correct care of horses has been emphasized. This is perhaps exemplified through the creation of a children's drill team in 1955 that stressed the care and management of horses, as well as training in safety measures and correct conduct in traffic. Beginning in the late 50's the Saddle Club began to support the Nebraska Heart Association's Heart Fund Drive with a charity horse show.

According to the application submitted for initial National Register review, current Saddle Club members describe that

The history of the Saddle Club is so interwoven into the tapestry of this community that it is difficult to pull out individual events and activities. It is about a rural way of life that continues to this day. L.B. Murphy had financed the mortgage for the Saddle Club. His widow and son summed up the importance of the Saddle Club to the community in their 1954 letter to the Club after L.B. Murphy's death. It read as follows: 'Because of the civic and educational benefits received by our community as a result of the activities of your Club, such as the annual Horse Show and other similar ones, we hereby CANCEL your debt as shown by the \$2500.00 note and mortgage given by L.B. Murphy on January 11, 1949.' Signed: Lillie B. Murphy D.A. Murphy.

As early as 1954, the significance of the Saddle Club was recognized within their own community. The Saddle Club continues today in the same spirit in which it was founded. The Club provides equestrian activities through shows, gymkhanas, training clinics and 4-H activities. The Saddle Club continues to encourage youth participation and education, as well as offering an opportunity for adults and seniors to enjoy riding and competing in various horse activities.

The Saddle Club in Scottsbluff is eligible at the local level under Criterion A in the area of Social History as well as Entertainment/Recreation. The Saddle Club is significant in the local history of the area for its role as both a social and a service club. Established at a time when lives were becoming more and more mechanized, the Saddle Club played an important role in maintaining a tangible link to equestrian activities, both social and work related. This socialization focused on riders and their horse, as well as a rider's responsibility to the community of riders as well as to the larger community. Socially, the Saddle Club has served to pass along "horse sense" to a whole generation who otherwise may have had no opportunity to learn the "Trail Rider's Creed". In doing so, a connection to a past way of life has been maintained. The Saddle Club is also eligible in the area of Entertainment/Recreation for its role in providing entertainment and recreational activities centered on equestrianism.

This property meets the requirements established under Criterion Consideration B in that two buildings, the horse barns, were moved from their original location during the period of significance specified for the Saddle Club. While these

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structures were undoubtedly significant as part of the larger Scotts Bluff Army Airfield, they were moved to their current location on the Saddle Club property in 1950. It is in their repurposed use as horse barns that they gain their current significance through association with the Saddle Club.

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Bibliography

A History of the Saddle Club 1947 - 1959. Compiled by Alberta Conklin, Club Historian. No date. On file, Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office.

The Scottsbluff Daily Star-Herald. Various issues, 1947-1958.

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Verbal Boundary Description:

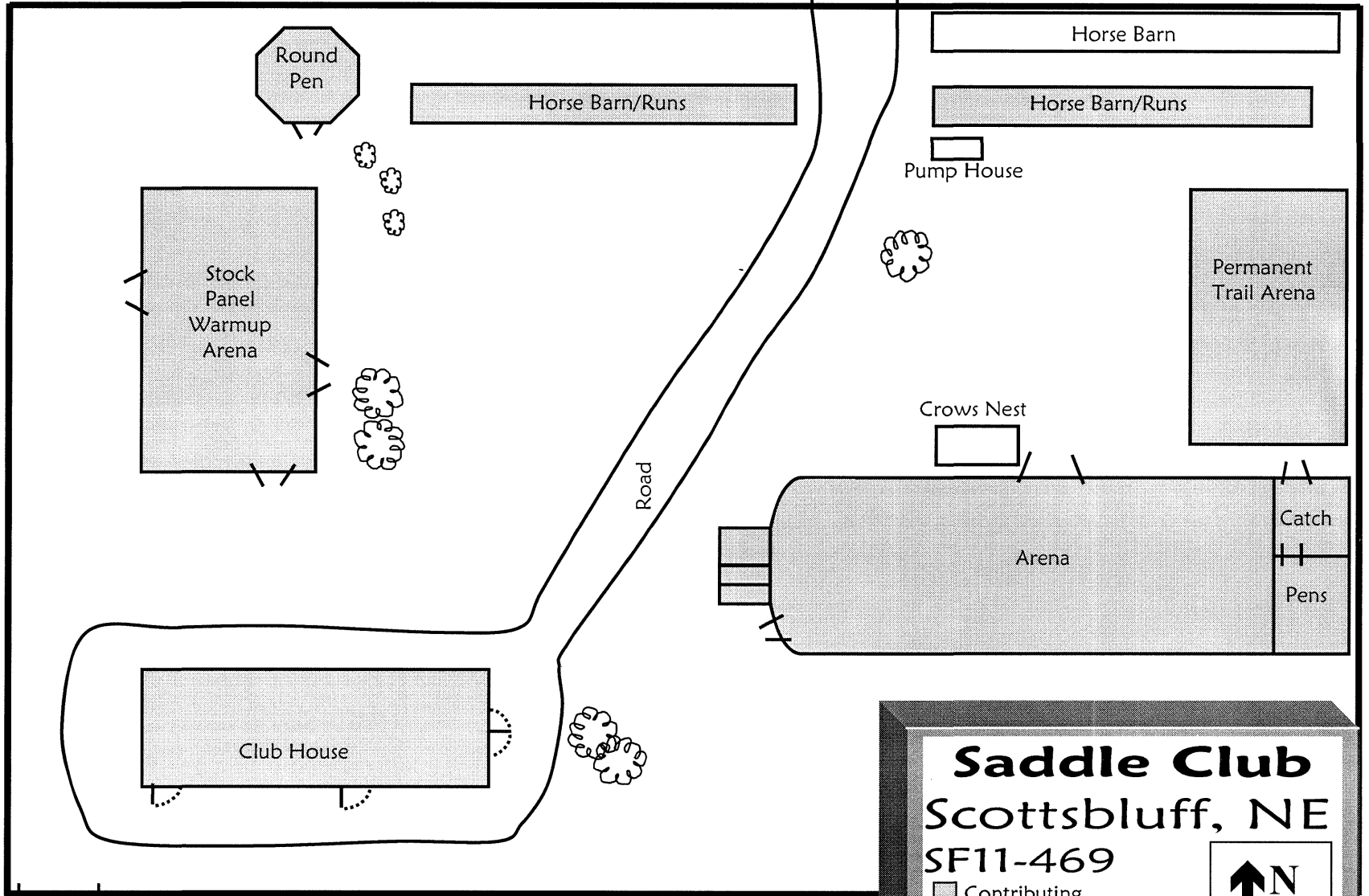
A part of Government Lot One (1), in the Northwest Quarter (NW ¼) of Section Twenty-Seven (27), Township Twenty-Two (22) North, Range Fifty-Five (55), West of the 6th Principal Meridian, in Scotts Bluff County, Nebraska, described as follows: Beginning at a Point Three Hundred Eighty Six (386') Feet East of the Northwest Corner of Said Section Twenty-Seven (27), and on the North Line of said Section (Bearing of said North Line being North 89°27" East), Thence South 5°43" West a Distance of Seven Hundred One and Five Tenths (701.5'); Thence North 74°5" East a Distance of Seven Hundred Sixteen and Seven Tenths (716.7') Feet; Thence North 0°43" West a Distance of Five Hundred Ten (510') Feet to the North Line of the Northwest Quarter of said Section 27; thence West on the North Line of said Section a Distance of Six Hundred Fourteen and Five Tenths (614.5') to the Point of Beginning.

Together with a right of way and easement Twenty-Five (25) Feet in the width Parallel to and East of the Southerly extension of the West line of the land hereinbefore described and extending in a Southerly direction to the thread of the stream of the North Platte River; subject to rights of way and existing roads, highways, and irrigation ditches; the west line of the right of way referred to is the southerly extension of the west line of the land above described.

Boundary Justification:

The boundary as described above includes the area historically associated with the Saddle Club and owned by the organization.

West Overland



Hwy 72 Bypass

Saddle Club
Scottsbluff, NE

SF11-469

■ Contributing
Not to scale.

