

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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 Colorado Amphitheater

other names/site number Structure #41

2. Location

street & number 15001 Denver West Parkway N/A not for publication

city or town Golden N/A vicinity

state Colorado code CO county Jefferson code 059 zip code 80401

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.)

Lois Thompson March 29, 1993
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Federal Preservation Officer, U.S. Department of Energy
State of Federal agency and bureau

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

[Signature] January 20, 1993
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State Historic Preservation Officer
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:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Beth Boland

5/20/93

Colorado Amphitheater
Name of Property

Jefferson, Colorado
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	
0	0	buildings
0	0	sites
2	0	structures
0	0	objects
2	0	Total

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

Historic Resources of Camp George West

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Recreation and Cultural

Auditorium/Pedestrian related

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Vacant/Not in use

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

No Style

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone

walls Stone, Concrete

roof Concrete

other _____

Narrative Description

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

Colorado Amphitheater
Name of Property

Jefferson, Colorado
County and 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)

Architecture

Social History

Period of Significance

1933 to 1938

Significant Dates

1933; 1935

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Frank J. Ardourel/Architect

Camp George West Transient Camp/Builder

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Colorado Amphitheater
Name of Property

Jefferson, Colorado
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property approximately 2 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	3	4	8	4	9	6	0	4	3	9	9	2	1	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

2

Zone	Easting				Northing									

3

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 Christian W. Pruchnic

organization National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) date July 31, 1992

street & number 1617 Cole Boulevard telephone 303/231-7194

city or town Golden state CO zip code 80401-3393

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 National Renewable Energy Laboratory, U.S. Department of Energy

street & number 1617 Cole Boulevard telephone 303/231-7194

city or town Golden state CO zip code 80401-3393

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.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 1

**Amphitheater, Camp George West
Jefferson County, CO**

Description

The Amphitheater and footbridge at Camp George West were constructed during 1933-1935 as part of the Work Project Administration (WPA). Both structures are located in a draw on the south side of South Table Mountain. They are located north of the main camp across a large open space that was used for military training and parade ground.

The Amphitheater, constructed of natural fieldstone and concrete, consists of an inverted U-shaped seating area flanked by concrete mortared stone walls which were buttressed for support. The lower three-quarters of the area consists of constructed seats while the upper fourth is undisturbed natural grass and is enclosed by a crude wall of rough fieldstone with minimal cement mortar. A stage with dressing rooms beneath was located at the lower end of the seating area. Between the stage and seating, a curved stone retaining wall with sloped ramps and two sets of steps allow access to the theater. The seating area was built on the natural slope below the mesa edge. It is composed of twenty-nine rows of concrete slabs supported on a base of native stone mortared with concrete. Each bench is approximately 0.4 meter (m) with 1 m of dirt floor between the rows. Grooved concrete slabs, 1 m wide, used for walkways were constructed on both exterior sides of the seats and through the center of the Amphitheater. The center walkway wraps around both sides of the projection booth, located one-fourth of the way up the Amphitheater seating. It returns to a single walkway for the lower quarter of the theater. Metal tubing was utilized for the hand railings which were located around the lower three-fourths of the Amphitheater. Only the upright metal supports, along with sections of railing, are left.

The projection booth is constructed of stone and mortar walls with a concrete slab roof and measures 3 X 3 m square by approximately 1.5 m in height. Located at the northeast corner is a wood framed doorway, presently without a door. On the south side, facing the stage, a wood lined projection window is situated; it also lacks any covering. The only visible structural damage to the projection booth is located on the northwest corner where a 0.5 m hole exists. The entire projection booth is encased in vegetation consisting of Hawthorn and Cottonwood trees as well as numerous plants.

The footbridge, constructed of natural fieldstone and concrete, was built at the same time as the Amphitheater as seen from contemporary photos of the era. It

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 2

Amphitheater, Camp George West

Amphitheater, Camp George West
Jefferson County, CO

Description (continued)

allowed pedestrian access to the Amphitheater across a drainage from a parking lot. The bridge walls are curved and contain a central arch over the drainage. The entire structure is approximately 2 m wide and 15 m long. It is located to the southwest corner of the Amphitheater. The tunnel that spans the drainage is 1.5 m high and 1.5 m wide with a curved span of mortared wall on both sides. For functional, as well as aesthetic purposes, the curved top walls were drawn out on both sides of the drainage. The four sections of wall, being 0.75 m high, are 5 m long. Near the terminal ends the walls flare away from each other. This results in a funnel shaped passageway directing usage towards the center of the bridge. The corners of the wall, on both sides, contain 1.2 m high pillars with pointed tops that anchor the bridge to their respective sides of the drainage.

Presently both structures are in a state of moderate deterioration. The stage of the Amphitheater was converted to an ammunition storage building in 1950 and is now collapsed. Stone appears to have been removed from the lower one-fourth of the seating area. When and for what purpose cannot be determined. The remainder of the seats show signs of displacement due to rodent activity, vegetation and the freeze\thaw cycle.

The eastern buttressed wall of the Amphitheater is mostly intact; the western wall is only 30 to 40% intact. Both side walkways, including the handrails, are displaced or missing. The top wall of the Amphitheater is collapsed in several places but appears to have resisted weathering better than the rest of the site. Heavy native vegetation, in the form of trees and shrubs, cover approximately 50% of the theater.

While the center of the footbridge is structurally sound, the west wall on the upstream side is missing. Several individual stones are missing from sections of the wall and the corner pillars. Heavy native vegetation also covers this structure.

In spite of the weathering and deterioration, both the Amphitheater and footbridge maintain their design and engineering integrity along with the integrity of their location, setting, feeling and association. Depending on the season a large majority of both structures are obscured from view. This distorts reality and

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 3

Amphitheater, Camp George West
Jefferson County, CO

Description (continued)

gives the appearance that they are in a greater state of deterioration. The construction methods and materials are readily visible as are the plans of the structures. The integrity of the setting has not changed.

An ammunition storage building (Building #110) is situated 10 m from the southern district boundary. Constructed in 1973, the walls, floor, and roof consist of concrete with an asphalt layer on the roof. A chain-link fence presently surrounds the building. It is currently being utilized for storage of small quantities of hazardous gases used for research purposes. This building is not being included in the district because it has no relation to the Amphitheater or Footbridge.

Statement of Significance

The Amphitheater and footbridge at Camp George West are significant for their social history. They meet criterion A for association with the public works project during the Great Depression of the 1930's and as part of Camp George West. They also meet criterion C for architectural significance as an example of a type, period, and construction methods of public works projects. They retain integrity of location, setting feeling, association, design, and materials. The Amphitheater and footbridge meet the registration requirements presented in the National Register Multiple Property Submission, "Historic Resources of Camp George West."

Conceived of and supervised by Lieutenant Frank J. Ardourel, the Amphitheater and footbridge were constructed from 1933 to 1935. Lieutenant Ardourel was assisted by Captain Raleigh Royal, quartermaster of the guard, and Lieutenant Mark Conway, who was in charge of the transient relief camp. The actual work was undertaken by the transient camp workers organized through the WPA program.

These structures are associated historically with the events of the Great Depression. More specifically, with the depression era public works projects in Colorado. Camp George West maintained a large unit of homeless men as part of the State Relief Organization. The construction of the Amphitheater and Footbridge was planned as a project for these homeless men. This public relief construction relied heavily on manpower and not machine. This labor force, according to The Denver Post of March 21, 1935, utilized mules and was put to work "for 21 meals and \$1 a week."

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 4

Amphitheater, Camp George West
Jefferson County, CO

Statement of Significance (continued)

Upon completion movies were shown at the Amphitheater every night during summer training for the Colorado National Guard. Boxing and wrestling matches were also held there as well as band concerts and Sunday sunrise services. In addition to the personnel of Camp George West, people from the local community of Pleasant View were invited to attend functions at the Amphitheater. Usage was limited to about two years and was mainly used during summer National Guard training. One factor causing its abandonment was the abundance of rattlesnakes that occupy the area. This caused movie watchers to bring forked sticks and pistols with them when attending functions in the Amphitheater.

The design and materials of the Amphitheater and Footbridge were similar to the rest of the camp. The utilization of local native stone throughout the camp allowed for structural unity of the architecture. The Amphitheater's placement on a natural drainage elevation allowed construction without significant earth moving. Due to the placement of the Amphitheater and bridge in the surrounding landscape this conveys a feeling that they belong there.

The Amphitheater is one of only four known historic open air amphitheaters in the state. With an estimated 2500 seats, it is the second largest and is the only one associated with a military post. The largest is Red Rocks Amphitheater (National Register, 1990). The Colorado Amphitheater represents the typical horseshoe shaped design employed for open air theaters.

The footbridge is also the work of the transient labor camp that built the Amphitheater. It is representative of the native stone construction used for buildings and structures at Camp George West during the first half of the twentieth century.

In order to appreciate the Amphitheater and footbridge for their social and architectural significance, a broad perspective needs to be undertaken. They should be viewed with respect to the use of the natural landscape in the architectural design, as examples of WPA projects and their association with Camp George West allows a certain mitigation of their current condition.

Both the Amphitheater and footbridge are contributing structures. They have been evaluated at the local level.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 9 Page 5

Amphitheater, Camp George West
Jefferson County, CO

Bibliographical References

Newspaper articles and programs:

"A Beautiful Amphitheater," The Denver Post. Denver, Colorado, March 21, 1935,
p.14.

Frances Melrose Column, Rocky Mountain News. Denver, Colorado, April 5, 1985
and April 21, 1985. p.44.

"Formal Dedication of Colorado Amphitheater," Dedication program, May 5, 1935.

Publications:

"Historic and Prehistoric Resources, South Table Mountain," Golden, Colorado.
Sarah M. Nelson, 1980, for the Department of the Interior.

"Historical Review Solar Research Institute," Golden, Colorado. Forum
Associates, Inc., 1987.

"SERI:Review of Potential Contaminant Sources and Hydrogeological Conditions
and Conceptual Design of a Ground Water Monitoring System," Western
Technologies Inc., Denver, Colorado. 1989

"Historic Resources of Camp George West," National Register Multiple Property
Submission.

Interviews: Conducted by T.H. Simmons of Front Range Research Associates, Inc.

Colonel Mark E. Conway, Retired Commander of Camp George West. Lakewood,
Colorado. January 23, 1992.

Frank and Edward Ardourel, February 10, 1992.

Mark and Martha Bennett, Member of Colorado National Guard since 1956.
Golden, Colorado. February 12, 1992.

Elena Thomas, daughter of F. Ardourel. Arvada, Colorado. February 3, 1992.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 10 Page 6

Amphitheater, Camp George West
Jefferson County, CO

Verbal Boundary Description

See scale map.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries encompass the Amphitheater, Footbridge and enough of the surrounding natural landscape to give a sense of setting and location needed to convey the historic feeling and association of the structures. The Amphitheater and Footbridge are located in a natural draw. The boundary includes the edges of the draw, the lower portion of the gully from the top includes the edges of the draw, the lower portion of the gully from the top of the mesa, and the rock outcrop above the Amphitheater. The Storage Bunker south of the bottom of the Amphitheater has been excluded because it is less than 50 years old and is not within the period of significance.

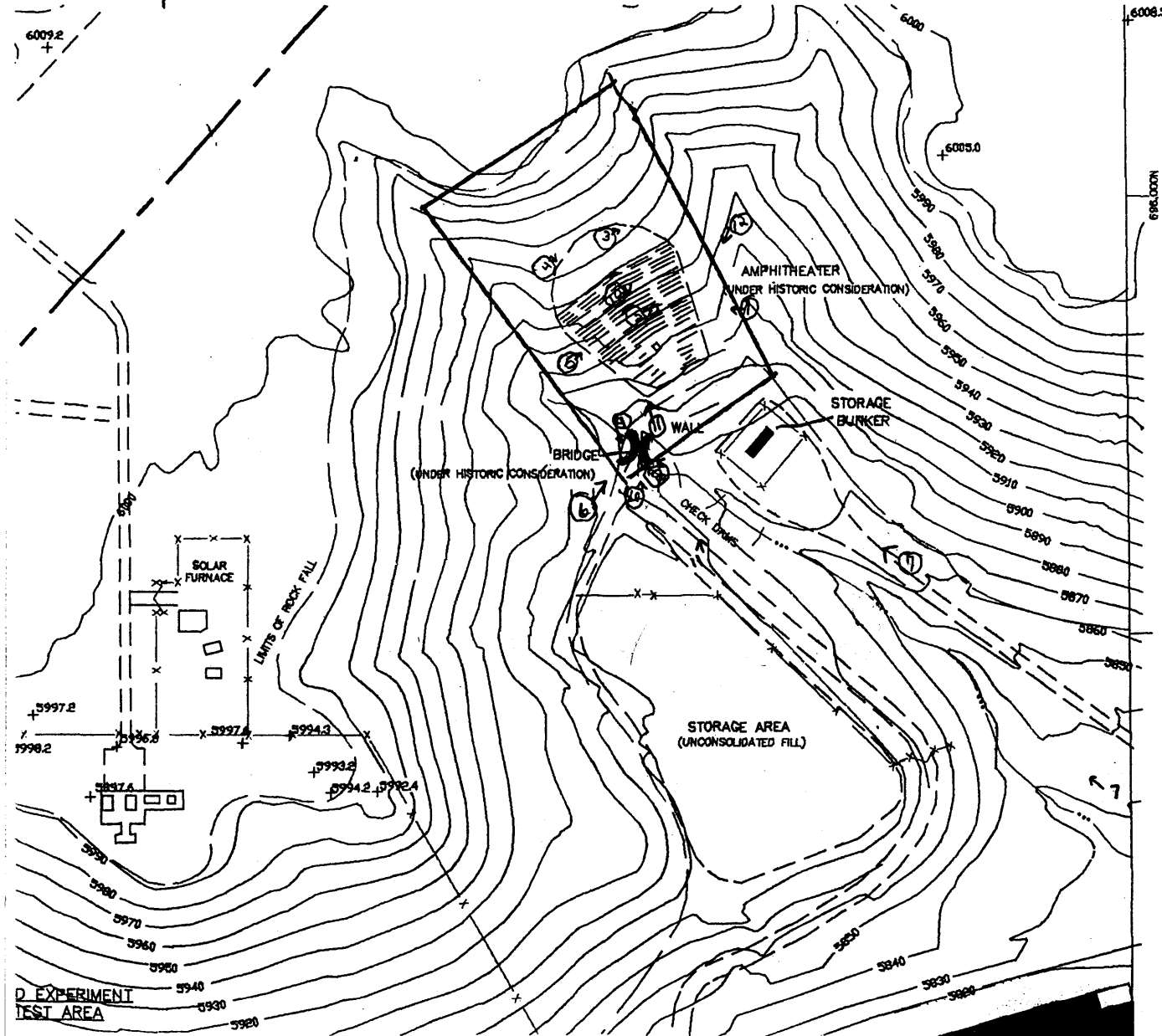
Colorado Amphitheater
Golden, Co. Jefferson County

Southtable Mountain
0.5 inch = 100ft

Photo log = #15, Direction = →
Boundary

CAMP GEORGE WEST MPS
AMPHITHEATER

BOUNDARY & PHOTO MAP
MAP 1 OF 3

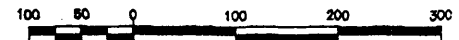


LEGEND

	EXISTING	PROPOSED
BUILDING PERMANENT		
BUILDING TEMPORARY		
PAVEMENTS (Roads, Parking, Pads, Etc)		
CURB AND GUTTER		
TRAIL OR EARTH ROAD		
SIDEWALKS AND RAMPS		
FENCE		
RESERVATION BOUNDARY		
RIGHT OF WAY OR EASEMENT LINE		
AREA LIMITS OUTLINE		
SOLAR POND AND RESERVOIR		
CULVERT WITH FLARED END		
DRAINAGE CHANNEL		
TOP OF STEEP SLOPE		
DEPRESSION		
INDEX CONTOUR		

NOTE

1. ROCKFALL AREA DERIVED FROM ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT, JANUARY 1980.
2. TOPO INTERPOLATED FROM AERIAL PHOTOGRAMMETRIC PROCESS BY HERRICK AND COMPANY - JANUARY 1980 AND UPDATED FROM AS-BUILTS BY HOGGINOTHAM AND ASSOCIATES MARCH 1984. 5 FT CONTOURS OMITTED FOR CLARITY.
3. THERE ARE NO REGISTERED HISTORIC SITES ON THIS PLAN HOWEVER NOTED SITES ARE UNDER CONSIDERATION FOR HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE.
4. 10,000-FOOT GRID BASED ON COLORADO COORDINATE SYSTEM, CENTRAL ZONE.

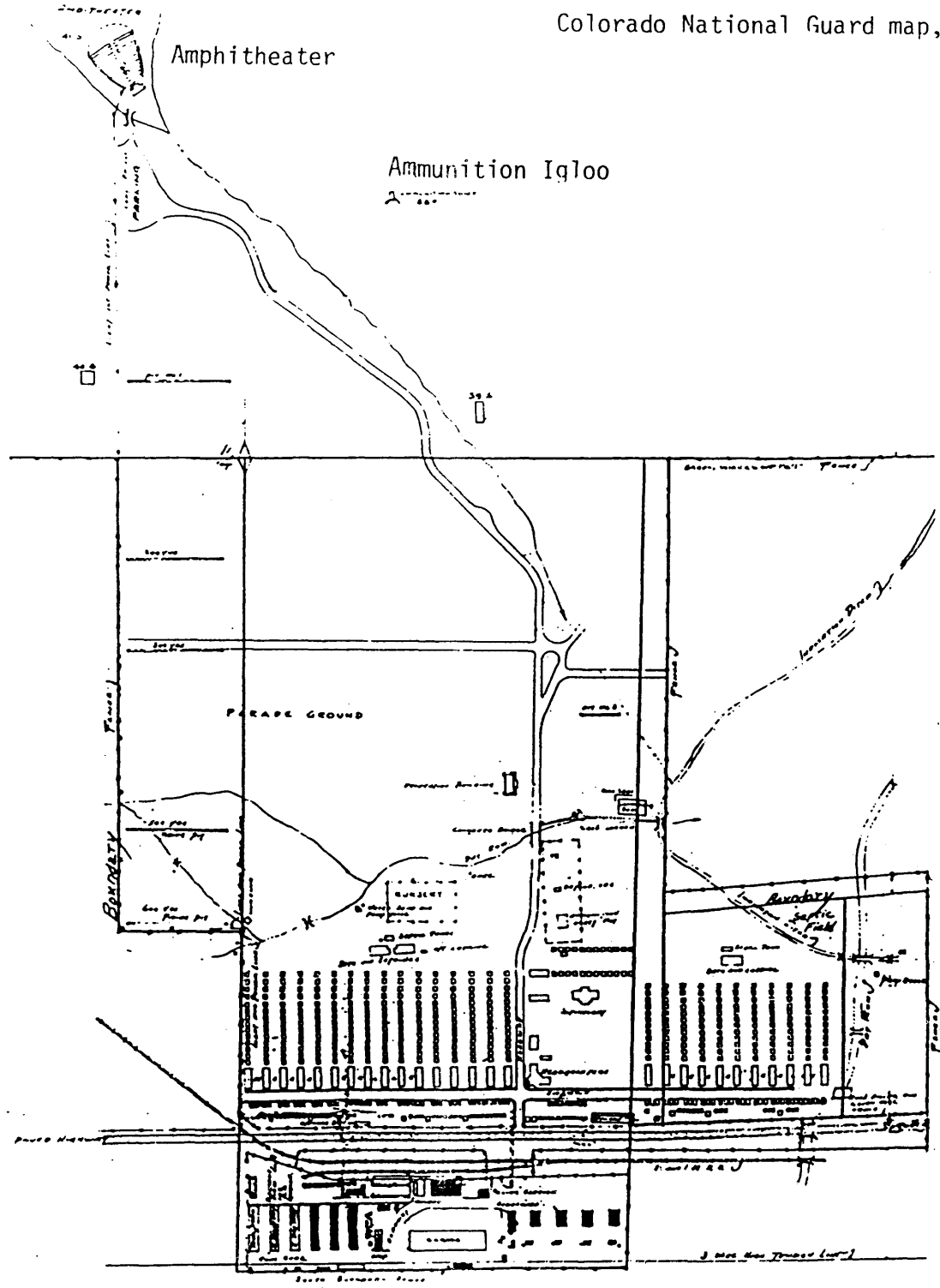


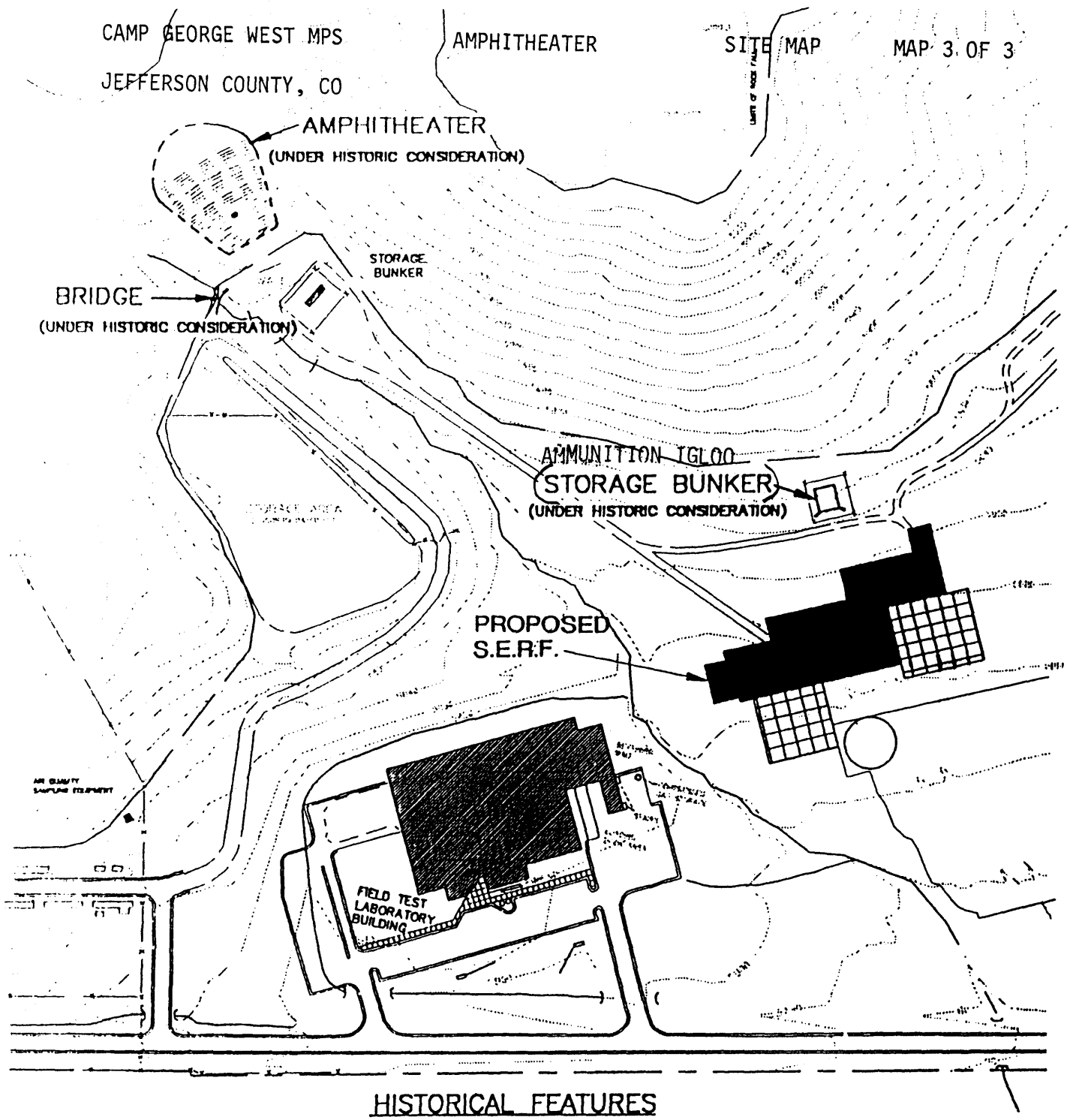
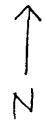
Camp George West, Jefferson County, Colorado

Colorado National Guard map, 1941

HISTORIC MAP

MAP 2 OF 3





HISTORIC FEATURES AT THE NREL SITE