

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

historic name Featherville School

other names/site number Church of the Wildwood

2. Location

street & number 4348 North Pine-Featherville Road

☐ N/A not for publication

city or town Featherville

☐ N/A vicinity

state Idaho code ID county Elmore code 039 zip code 83647

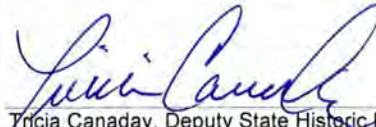
3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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 at the following level(s) of significance: national statewide ☒ local

Applicable National Register Criteria: ☒ A B ☒ C D


Tricia Canaday, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

10-11-19
Date

Idaho State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official

Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

☒ entered in the National Register

 determined eligible for the National Register

 determined not eligible for the National Register

 removed from the National Register

 other (explain:)


Signature of the Keeper

12/2/2019
Date of Action

Featherville School
Name of Property

Elmore County, Idaho
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

<input type="checkbox"/>	private
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

Public School Buildings in Idaho

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION/School

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RELIGION/Religious Facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

No Style

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: CONCRETE

walls: WOOD: Weatherboard

roof: METAL

other:

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Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

SUMMARY PARAGRAPH

The Featherville School is a one-room school house located in a remote Rocky Mountain setting of southern Idaho, within the small, unincorporated community of Featherville. The school house is in its original location along a river terrace, on a lot fronting Pine-Featherville Road. The school grounds have panoramic vistas in all directions of forested mountains, as well as miles of dredge spoils along the Feather and South Fork Boise Rivers, remnants of early-twentieth-century gold mining activities with which the school is associated.

Built circa (ca.) 1912,¹ the gable-front Featherville School is an excellent example of the one-room school house building form (Figure 1). Character-defining features of this type include a rectangular plan with a cloakroom entryway and single classroom divided by an interior wall. The school's exterior, with its white-painted wood clapboard siding and metal roof, has modest ornamentation including Craftsman-inspired overhanging eaves and exposed, decorative rafter tails. A cupola that houses the original school bell is on the peak of the roof near the front gable. Original banked one-over-one sash windows on the west side of the building are the primary source of lighting. The interior of the school also retains original materials including wood flooring, plaster walls, and wood wainscoting. The Featherville School has had very few alterations since its construction and readily conveys its historical significance through its excellent integrity of design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.



Jerry Kenke Photography, Mountain Home (used with permission)

Figure 1. The Featherville School, 1981.

¹ School District Ledgers, on file, Mountain Home Historical Museum, including: *Record of Teachers Contracts* (1904-1907), Reference No. 9.3.760 and *Record of School Teachers Term Reports* (1898-1926), Reference No. 9.3.759.

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Narrative Description

LOCATION AND SETTING

The Featherville School is located approximately 45 miles northeast of the Elmore County seat of Mountain Home, on a 0.5-acre lot overlooking the confluence of the Feather River tributary with the South Fork Boise River (Figure 2). Scattered residences, mostly recreational second homes, are adjacent to the school and along with a newer café, saloon, and motel complex, comprise unincorporated Featherville. Pine-Featherville Road terminates at the town; beyond this point are the Boise and Sawtooth National Forests.

The undeveloped, forested mountains and river valley provide the backdrop to the Featherville School. The site elevation is 4,550 ft. and the school's immediate setting consists of scattered Ponderosa pine and cottonwood trees with sage and grass understory. A gravel driveway and parking area provide access to the front of the building, or north façade, from Pine-Featherville Road, and the building's orientation parallels the road rather than cardinal directions. The south side of the lot drops steeply to the river floodplain, where large piles of rocks that were deposited by historical dredge mining activities extend for miles upriver (Figure 3).



Google Earth 2018

Figure 2. Rocky Mountain setting of the Featherville School (arrow), facing north. The community of Featherville extends from the bridge at the far left to the end of the paved road just beyond the far right of the photograph.

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Sarah McDaniel 2017

Figure 3. The Featherville School and historic gold dredge piles between the Feather River (immediately behind the school) and the South Fork Boise River (at the top of the photograph), facing southeast.

EXTERIOR

Stylistically, the Featherville School is a one-story, wood-framed building with original horizontal board, simple drop cladding. The front-gabled, rectangular building measures 26 ft. east-west by 32 ft. north-south. The foundation, which averages 20 in. in height, is poured conglomerate cement with centered wooden ventilation breezeways on the east and west elevations. The steeply pitched, original corrugated metal roof has overhanging eaves and exposed, decorative rafter tails. The height to the peak of the roof is 26 ft. 4 in. The front-gabled cupola, which houses the still-functional, original school bell, is located at the front of the building and also has a corrugated metal roof; the height to the peak of the cupola is 31 ft. A single inset brick chimney is centered on the roof at the south (rear) elevation. Plain wood corner boards are present on all elevations, and machine-cut wire nails are present throughout.

The school has a central porch entry on the north-facing (front) façade. The porch measures 12 ft. east-west by 8 ft. north-south. A new cement accessible ramp provides access to a modern wood board porch floor. Over the porch is an open-timbered end gable roof with wood decking supported by two posts. The height of the roof over the front porch is 15 ft. 6 in., and the roof extends out from the building 12 ft. east-west and 9 ft. 6 in. north-south. The entry consists of two three-panel doors measuring 6 ft. by 7 ft. along the frame (each door is 3 by 7 ft.) with a single pane of glass at the top of each door. A small rectangular opening near the apex of the building, below the cupola, originally housed a window but has been covered with plywood, probably in the 1970s when a drop ceiling was added to the interior of the building.

On the west elevation are six double-hung sash windows with one-over-one lights, with dimensions of 3 by 6 ft. The windows are trimmed with white-painted wood molding. One small square fixed window measuring 28 by 31 in. high (including the wood frame and glass) is also located on the west elevation and allows light into the entry hall. The east elevation has a symmetrical fixed window providing light into the entry hall. No other distinguishing architectural details are present on this side of the building.

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Three concrete steps provide access to an asymmetrical door on the south or rear elevation. There are no windows, but a ghost roof line is present and represents a former asymmetrical porch over the five-panel door. This porch was removed in the 1980s and was formerly used as a woodshed to supply the former wood stove used for heating the building (Figure 1).² The rear door provided access to two separate privies, which were replaced by a modern pit toilet in the 1980s.³ The current pit toilet, a modern non-contributing element associated with the property, is about 15 ft. behind the school.

INTERIOR

The interior plan consists of two rooms that occupy an area of approximately 750 square ft., including the entryway/cloakroom (5 by 25 ft.) and the classroom (25 by 25 ft.) (Figure 4). The front porch double doors lead into the cloakroom entryway, which is divided from the classroom by an interior east-west oriented wall. The interior wall has two symmetrical, five-panel wood doors that provide entry into the classroom, off-set from the side walls by approximately 12 in. All wood doors on the interior and exterior of the building have original hardware including round metal doorknobs. Original coat hooks are present on the north wall, west of the front door, and were originally present on the north wall, east of the front door, although those have been removed. Flooring consists of original wood boards that have been painted brown and fastened with wire nails. The walls are original white plaster above stained wood wainscoting. The ceiling consists of the drop-ceiling with fiber panels that was added in the 1970s.

On the interior north wall of the classroom are two built-in cupboards with doors. On the west wall a grouping of six double-hung windows provides the only source of lighting for the classroom. Adhesive vinyl window coverings were added more recently to the inside of the top windows giving the appearance of colorful divided-light, stained glass. On the south wall of the classroom is the chimney with a propane stove for heating, and the off-center external door leading to the modern outdoor pit toilet. The east wall of the classroom has a series of three green chalkboards, believed to be original, that abut the wainscoting, placed at two different heights to accommodate various age groups. Original school-era items currently present in the building include five folding desks and several primary school text books housed in the cupboards on the north interior wall of the classroom, the earliest dating to 1914.⁴

² Marlene McCoy, "Featherville School," Mountain Home Historical Museum (Mountain Home, ID, n.d [c.2010]), 19A.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ella Flagg Young and Walter Taylor Field, *The Young and Field Literary Readers, Book Four* (Boston, MA: The Atheneum Press, Ginn and Company, 1914).

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Sarah McDaniel 2014

Figure 4. Interior view of the Featherville School, with blackboards on the left and banked windows on the right.

ALTERATIONS AND INTEGRITY

The building has been leased from the Mountain Home School District by members of the Featherville community for use as a Christian church since the early 1970s. At that time, the Church of the Wildwood lowered the ceiling with drop panels, installed a new gas stove to replace the wood-burning stove, and had pews built to replace the elementary school desks.⁵ In the 1980s, a new pit toilet was installed to replace the original pit toilets and the porch on the rear elevation of the building was removed. The Featherville School had no electricity or plumbing, however a small amount of electrical amperage was added in the 1980s to provide power for sound equipment. A frost-free water hydrant was also installed at that time to provide water from the adjacent community well.⁶

The property is in excellent condition and has had very little alteration since its construction. The original floorplan and building materials are intact. Alterations to the building's exterior include the accessible ramp at the entryway, the entryway porch floor, removal of the window at the apex of the front of the building, and removal of the rear porch. Alterations to the interior include installation of a drop-ceiling and a propane stove that replaced the original wood-burning stove. The two front entry porch support posts were recently replaced with similar wood posts in 2017 after heavy snow fall caused them to fail.

None of these modern modifications affect the overall integrity of the building. The Featherville School exhibits a high level of integrity and is an excellent example of the one-room school house typical of rural regions of Idaho during the early twentieth century. The school clearly illustrates its period of significance (ca. 1912-1956) through its historic appearance and retention of original location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, and feeling.

⁵ Carl Hamilton, "Oh, Come to the Church in the Wildwood," n.d., n.p. Clipped newspaper article displayed in the Church of the Wildwood.

⁶ Lowell Schuknecht (Church of the Wildwood), personal communication with Sarah Schuknecht McDaniel, April 11, 2018.

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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 grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

ca. 1912-1956

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance begins when the school was first built about 1912 and ends in 1956 when the building was no longer used as a school.

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Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

Though used as a church since the 1960s, this contemporary use falls outside of the period of significance described above. In addition, the school is nominated using the registration requirements as part of the existing MPD, *Public School Buildings in Idaho* (Architecture and Education), and not Religion.

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The Featherville School is being nominated under Criteria A and C. The school meets National Register Criterion A in the area of EDUCATION for its significance at the local level as an early-twentieth century educational and social institution associated with the historical mining community of Featherville. Built around 1912, shortly after Featherville had been founded in conjunction with gold dredging operations, the Featherville School reflects the need for this remote mountain community to have a building dedicated to the education of its children. The one-room school house operated for about 40 years and was also used as a venue for public meetings and social activities. The Featherville School's period of significance (ca. 1912-1956) is based on the school's dates of operation. The ca. 1912 date is the approximate year local citizens constructed the school. The end of the school's period of significance is the post-World War II era, when the mining economy collapsed and there was no longer a sufficient permanent population to warrant continued operation of the school. The Featherville School is now the most prominent, surviving building associated with historical Featherville.

The Featherville School is also being nominated at the state level under National Register Criterion C in the area of ARCHITECTURE as an excellent example of the one-room school house building form espoused in rural Idaho during Early Statehood, the period from 1890 to 1930 that saw the evolution of the centralized school system and tightening standards for building construction. The school meets evaluation and registration criteria outlined in Section F of the *Public School Buildings in Idaho Multiple Property Documentation Form*, as certified by the National Park Service in 1991.⁷

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

CRITERION A: EDUCATION IN RURAL ELMORE COUNTY

The Featherville School was an important educational facility serving families residing in a small, isolated community in northern Elmore County during the early- to mid-twentieth century. The Featherville School was constructed in conjunction with a local boom from dredge mining of placer gold in the river valley behind the school. Dredging began intermittently about 1908 and intensified during the early 1920s as the South Park Dredging Company of California began a major dredging enterprise that made Featherville the largest gold producer in the state for several of these years.⁸ Although classes were previously held in at least two other buildings, including a community hall and a hotel, the growing community needed a designated school building that was best suited by the one-room school house because of its limited number of school-aged children. The Featherville School was the only school building ever erected in Featherville, which had a peak population of about 120 residents in 1910. The school also represents the rise and decline of dredge mining, and that industry's pivotal role in the economic development of Featherville.

⁷ Elizabeth Egleston, "Public School Buildings in Idaho," National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form (Boise, ID: State Historic Preservation Office, 1991).

⁸ Earl H. Bennett, Bulletin 2064-W, "Geology and Mineral Deposits of the Hailey Quadrangle, Idaho." (Denver, CO: U.S. Geological Survey, 2001).

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The number of children attending the school was always low, at most about 20 students and with as few as five students for periods of time,⁹ but the school filled an educational and social need in the remote community until advances in automobile transportation, a decline in mineral mining, and the consolidation of schools by the local school district all contributed to its permanent closing in 1956. A school has not been reestablished in Featherville since that time.

The site setting supports the school's period of significance, as the Featherville School overlooks miles of rock tailings that line the South Boise River valley. Views of this landscape provide a direct link to the school's founding during the short-lived but intense period of dredge mining. From the school's vantage point, children attending classes would have seen the dredge in operation. The original Featherville store, post office, hotel, and mining offices, which were historical contemporaries of the school, are no longer present and have been replaced by modern buildings, leaving the Featherville School as an isolated building illustrating this era.

CRITERION C: ONE-ROOM SCHOOL HOUSE ARCHITECTURAL STYLE

One-room school houses were by far the most common type of school building in Idaho and even more so in Elmore County during the early 1900s. Of the 1,664 school buildings in the state in 1913, 936 (or about 63 percent) were one-room schools.¹⁰ In Elmore County, this proportion was even higher: 15 out of 21 schools (or 71 percent) were one-room school houses, with five of them in the interconnected northern Elmore County mining communities of Pine, Featherville, Rocky Bar, and Atlanta.

Increasing standardization in education and building design in Idaho began to change in the early 1900s. Shortly before the Featherville School was built, in 1911 the Idaho State Board of Education was granted the authority to direct all education affairs in an attempt to improve statewide standards, but the presence of many small districts made centralized regulation difficult.¹¹ Within just a couple of years, the State Board of Education announced that the "*old box-car type of building with cross lights and a stove in the middle of the room is fast disappearing*," and in Elmore County several schools were being "*raised to a higher standard...using the latest improvements in blackboards, sanitary drinking fountains, toilets, and some improved system of heating and ventilating*."¹² Increasing concerns for adequate standards in construction of school houses, including proper plan, lighting, heating, sanitation, and ventilation continued to be addressed by the State Board of Education in the following decades. Plans for new school buildings were to be preapproved by the board, resulting in more standardized construction even in rural areas. However, the Featherville School had already been built by the time the State Board of Education published architectural plans for the building of one-room school houses to assist rural communities without the means of hiring an architect.¹³

Built ca. 1912 by local residents, the Featherville School incorporates several standard construction elements promoted by the Idaho State Board of Education regarding plan, structure, and lighting, although it is unknown if approval was sought from the State prior to its construction. The overall shape of the Featherville School is a simple, end-gabled rectangular plan, with one large classroom divided from the small entryway/cloakroom. The building's dimensions of 32 by 26 ft. are consistent with period plans for a building having a class capacity of 45 students. Banked, double-hung sash windows in the classroom and two fixed windows in the entryway provided good natural lighting given the lack of electricity. In addition to the operational sash windows, ventilation intake features were installed at the foundation to improve air circulation. A wood stove was placed

⁹ School District Ledgers, on file, Mountain Home Historical Museum, including: *Record of Teachers Contracts*, Book 1 (1904-1907), Reference No. 9.3.760; *Record of School Teachers Term Reports* (1898-1926), Reference No. 9.3.759.

¹⁰ *Biennial Report of the State Board of Education and Board of Regents of the University of Idaho*, Volumes 1-3 (Boise, ID: State Board of Education, 1914), 263.

¹¹ Elizabeth Egleston, "Public School Buildings in Idaho," E5.

¹² *Biennial Report of the State Board of Education and Board of Regents of the University of Idaho*, 1914, 196, 217-218; "*Handbook for Rural School Trustees*," *Idaho Bulletin of Education*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (Boise, ID: State Board of Education, 1917).

¹³ "School House Plans: One and Two-room Buildings," *Idaho Bulletin of Education*. Vol. 4, No. 3 (Boise, ID: State Board of Education, 1918); "School House Plans: One, Two and Three Room Buildings," *Idaho Bulletin of Education*. Volume 13, No. 4 (Boise, ID: State Board of Education, 1927).

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at the end of the building and was the most efficient method for heating a one-room school at that time. Two separate privies (no longer present), one for each gender, were built behind the school and met sanitation requirements of that era.

Some features of the school deviate slightly from the idealized school house plans. The bell cupola, a dominant architectural feature of the Featherville School, was a decorative element that was discouraged in later State-approved building plans, and the 0.5-acre lot is less than the 1-acre size recommended for one-room school houses. Also, amenities at the school were basic; neither electricity nor running water was provided to the school during its period of operation, and a playground, garden, or other recreational equipment were never part of the school grounds.

The *Public School Buildings in Idaho Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF)* registration requirements state:

In order to be eligible for the National Register, a property must exhibit its historic and architectural character in both physical and associative ways. It must be significant when evaluated within the context of the history of the community, and the background of Idaho's educational system.

Schools must retain integrity in order to be eligible. The roof configuration, scale, massing, wall cladding, and trim and fenestration should sufficiently convey the historic character of the building. Alterations in these five areas do not automatically exclude a property from nomination. Many schools have undergone window replacements or the application of aluminum and metal siding. Schools have also been adapted for other uses, such as houses, museums, churches, and granges. Alterations must be carefully evaluated to determine the impact to the significant character of the building. Original fenestration patterns should be maintained, and additions should not obscure the principal facades. Siding is acceptable if it closely resembles the original cladding of the structure. Alterations and additions that occurred during the building's period of significance might reflect changing patterns in education and school architecture, and should be evaluated within such a context.

The Featherville School retains the original roof configuration, scale, massing, wall cladding, trim and fenestration, and therefore clearly meets the aforementioned registration requirements to utilize the Public School Buildings in Idaho MPDF. Use of wood cladding as the predominant construction material mirrors Featherville's forested setting. The cement foundation, simple drop siding, and corrugated metal roofing are original and further demonstrate utilization of readily-available materials. Limited ornamentation reflects function over aesthetics and includes Craftsman-inspired exposed, decorative rafter tails and functional exposed nailers on the exterior roof line. Interior decorative woodwork includes wainscoting and built-in cabinetry. Alterations have been minor, limited to placement of a drop ceiling, a new porch floor with accessible ramp at the main entry, and removal of a porch on the rear façade. These minor alterations do not diminish the integrity of the building.

The Featherville School maintains outstanding associative and physical integrity as an early-twentieth century, one-room school house typical of Idaho's rural settings, and is one of approximately 21 one-room schools that operated in Elmore County around the time it was constructed.¹⁴ At present, there are no National Register listed one-room school houses in the county, underscoring the importance of the Featherville School as a significant architectural property type in this region of Idaho.

¹⁴ *Biennial Report of the State Board of Education and Board of Regents of the University of Idaho*, 263.

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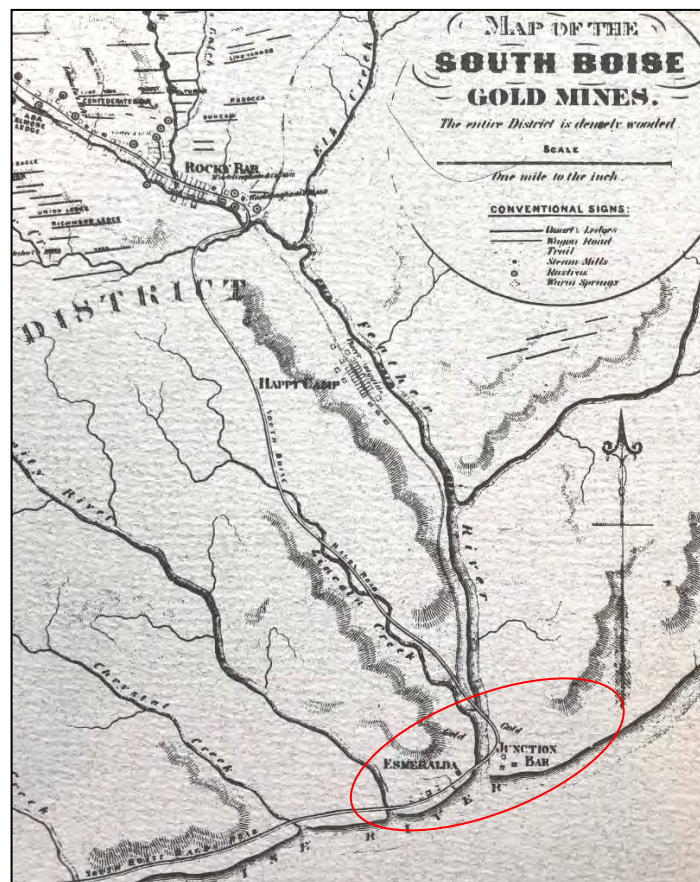
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Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

HISTORY OF FEATHERVILLE AND THE FEATHERVILLE SCHOOL

SETTLEMENT PERIOD (1860s-1880s)

Mining prospectors first discovered gold placer and quartz deposits in Idaho Territory's South Boise Basin in 1863, including along the Feather River and South Fork Boise River.¹⁵ The area now occupied by Featherville was the site of the Esmerelda mining camp during the initial gold rush, and was, for a very short period of time, designated as the newly-created Alturas County seat. *"But when the appointed officers arrived at Esmerelda they found no houses of any character and consequently proceeded to the town of Rocky Bar, where by general consent the county seat was established, and where it remained until removed by fraud in 1882 to Hailey."*¹⁶ Overshadowed by the more lucrative mineral deposits found first at nearby Rocky Bar about 8 miles to the north, and soon after at Atlanta 15 miles farther northeast, Esmerelda was soon abandoned and never progressed beyond a handful of prospectors' tents and cabins (Figure 5).



Charles Angelo, 1866

Figure 5. 1866 map of the South Boise Gold Mines depicting the prosperous Alturas County Seat of Rocky Bar, and the smaller camps of Esmerelda and Junction Bar in the location of what would become Featherville more than 40 years later.

¹⁵ Merle W. Wells, "South Boise," in *Gold Camps and Silver Cities: Nineteenth-Century Mining in Central and Southern Idaho* (Moscow, ID: Idaho Department of Lands, Bureau of Mines and Geology, 1983), 16-26.

¹⁶ *Elmore Bulletin* (Rocky Bar: ID), June 1, 1889, 2. Available, chroniclingamerica.loc.gov.

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In 1864, Julius Newberg completed a stage route linking the burgeoning South Boise Basin mineral mining communities through the area that would become Featherville. The South Boise Wagon Road connected Rocky Bar with the Oregon Trail via Goodale's Cutoff at Little Camas Prairie and facilitated a rapid increase in settlement and mining enterprises in the South Boise Basin.¹⁷ But the steep Rocky Mountain terrain and extreme winters still proved to be a hindrance for transportation and mine development, and by 1866, several of the mining companies operating at Rocky Bar were already plagued by a legacy of debts, litigation, worthless stock, and bad publicity.¹⁸ Another 20 years would pass until improved technology and additional capital brought significant hardrock mining production back to the South Boise mines. Rocky Bar was reestablished as a county seat in 1889 when Elmore County, named after Nevada-famed H.T.P. Comstock's high-producing Ida-Elmore Mine at Rocky Bar, was carved out of Alturas County (Figure 6).

Around this same time, prospectors discovered a new outcrop of ore along the South Fork Boise River 20 miles south of Rocky Bar along Newberg's Road, at the small community of Pine Grove.¹⁹ A stamp mill was immediately brought in from Rocky Bar as Pine Grove experienced its own gold rush.²⁰ Although the occasional homestead, tollgate, and travelers' stops sprung up along the wagon road between Pine Grove and Rocky Bar, this area remained only sparsely populated during Idaho Territory's early settlement period. However, all four of these early Elmore County mountain communities—Rocky Bar, Atlanta, Pine Grove, and later, Featherville—were interrelated in terms of their geographic isolation, linked transportation routes, historical mining economies, and even in their residents, many of whom migrated from one to the next in conjunction with new mineral discoveries and economic opportunities (Figure 6).

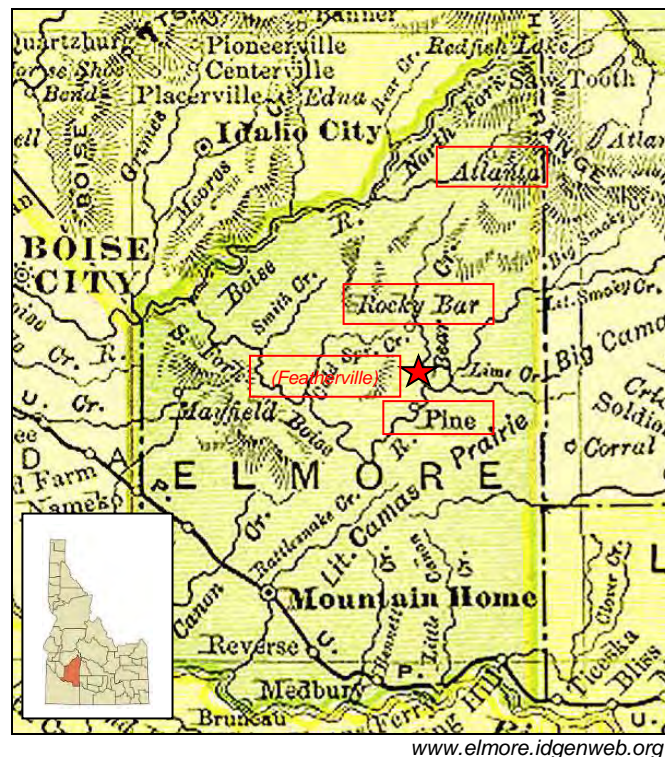


Figure 6. 1895 map of Elmore County, Idaho, highlighting early northern Elmore County mining communities, with the approximate location of Featherville, not yet a town, indicated by a star.

¹⁷ "South Boise Wagon Road," Idaho State Historical Society Reference Series Number 94 (Boise, ID: Idaho State Historical Society), August, 1964.

¹⁸ Wells, "South Boise," 18.

¹⁹ "Grove" was later dropped from "Pine Grove", but this refers to the predecessor community in the area of modern-day Pine.

²⁰ "Pine, Bennett Mountain, Lime Creek and Wood Creek." Idaho State Historical Society Reference Series Number 164 (Boise, ID: Idaho State Historical Society), 1980.

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As the early gold-rush settlements developed into larger towns with more families, they began to build one-room school houses. Rocky Bar and Atlanta had schools operating by the 1870s²¹ and by 1885, there were 11 school districts in Alturas County, numbered in order of their origination, including Rocky Bar District No. 1 with an average of 44 pupils, and Atlanta District No. 3 with 60 pupils.²² The school districts were renumbered after Elmore County was subdivided from Alturas County in 1889, with Atlanta designated as District No. 1, Rocky Bar as District No. 2 and Pine Grove School as District No. 5. However, two more decades would pass until the Featherville School would be established as Elmore County School District No. 18.²³

EARLY STATEHOOD (1890s-1930)

Junction Bar

By the time Idaho achieved Statehood in 1890, Esmerelda had been long forgotten. At its same general location at the confluence of the Feather and South Fork Boise Rivers, however, a residual gold-rush era settlement named Junction Bar persisted (Figure 5).²⁴ As an outgrowth of Rocky Bar and predecessor of Featherville, Junction Bar was the site of some small-scale placer mining and sawmill operations, and of a roadhouse and saloon owned by Charles Crossman.²⁵ Only about seven individuals resided at Junction Bar at the time of the 1890 census, however, as compared to about 1,000 at Rocky Bar.²⁶

Even after a resurgence in mining, by the late 1890s most placer and quartz lodes in the Rocky Bar and Atlanta vicinity had either played out or were not as lucrative as once thought, and there was a mass exodus in population.²⁷ Rocky Bar lost its position as County Seat in 1891 to the nascent railroad town of Mountain Home, about 45 miles southwest of the South Boise mines, symbolic of a regional economic shift from mining to agriculture.

Although the deep gravels with high gold values along the South Fork Boise River and Feather River had attracted more placer prospectors by the late 1890s, investment scams and a lack of capital continued to prevent large-scale placer mining efforts for another decade.²⁸ By 1900, the population of Junction Bar had increased to 81.²⁹ Most residents were men employed as miners, although farmers, carpenters, sheep raisers, cooks, and saloon keeper Charles Crossman were among those residing at Junction Bar Precinct. About half of the population had emigrated from foreign countries such as Portugal, Germany, Japan, China, Finland, Sweden, Poland, Scotland, and England, indicating great cultural diversity within the small, predominantly single-male, mining-oriented populace. There were only five families with young children, four of whom are listed as “at school” in the census.

There is scant information about the community's development during this time. A U.S. General Land Office map dated 1906 depicts only one structure in the area, Crossman's saloon (Figure 7).³⁰ Crossman filed for a

²¹ Olive Groefsema, *Elmore County: Its Historical Gleanings* (Caldwell, ID: Caxton Printers, 1949), 313.

²² “Apportionment Money, Alturas County, 1884.” On file, Mountain Home Historical Museum.

²³ School district ledgers show that district numbering would again shift in 1901 and over time as schools were consolidated and closed throughout the following decades, but the Featherville School was always District No. 18.

²⁴ “Junction Bar” is named on the 1891 U.S.G.S. Rocky Bar, Idaho, topographic quadrangle (1:125,000), although no buildings are shown.

²⁵ Barbara Hittle (ed.), *Buckaroo Bill Tate: A Memoir, 1859-1953* (Mountain Home, ID: Mountain Home Historical Society, 2006), 16-17.

²⁶ U.S. Census Office, “Preliminary Results as Contained in the Eleventh Census Bulletins by the United States, 1890” and “Table 5. Population of States and Territories by Minor Civil Divisions: 1880 and 1890.” Database online, accessed August 9, 2014, www.census.gov/library/publications/1895/dec/volume-1.html. The 1890 census listed a population of 1,870 in Elmore County, including 7 individuals at the Junction Bar Precinct, 95 at Atlanta, 155 at Pine Grove, 364 at Mountain Home, and 505 at Rocky Bar. A local newspaper account places the population of Rocky Bar as around 1,000, however. *Elmore Bulletin* (Rocky Bar: ID), June 1, 1889, 2. Database online, accessed June 9, 2018, <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov>.

²⁷ Wells, “South Boise,” 22-26.

²⁸ Clark C. Spence, *A History of Gold Dredging in Idaho* (Denver, Colorado: University Press of Colorado, 2015), 158-159.

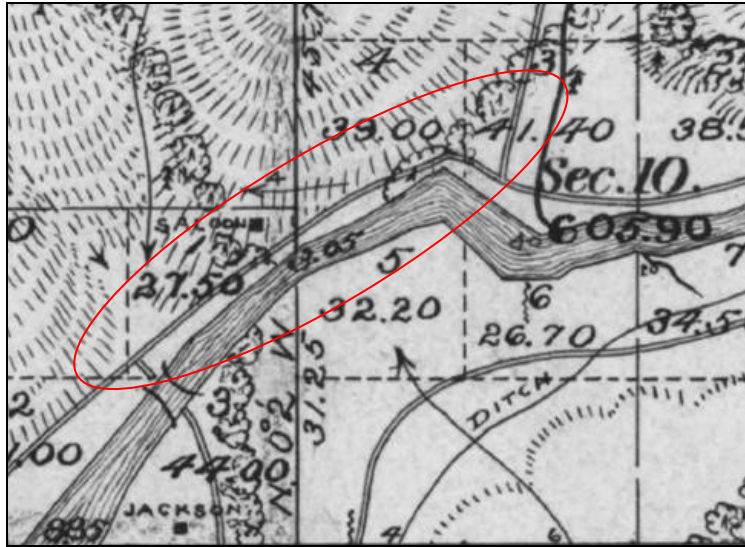
²⁹ U.S. Census Office, “1900 United States Census, Junction Bar Precinct.” Database online, accessed August 9, 2014, <http://ancestry.com>.

³⁰ U.S. General Land Office, Original Survey Plat 43535, Township 3 North, Range 10 East of the Boise Meridian, Idaho. January 30, 1906. Eric G. Eagleson, Surveyor General. Database online, accessed June 9, 2016, <https://glorerecords.blm.gov>.

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land patent for 152 acres along the Feather River in 1908, including the land where the town of Featherville and its school would soon be built.³¹



www.glorerecords.blm.gov

Figure 7. Portion of a 1906 General Land Office plat for Township 3 North, Range 10 East, showing Crossman's roadhouse/saloon in the area where Featherville would emerge within a few years (oval).

Given the small population and low number of school-aged children at Junction Bar in 1900, it seems unlikely that the community was able to support formal education at this time; no teachers are listed in the census and a designated school building was not present.³² However, the one-room school at Rocky Bar was flourishing with an average daily attendance of nearly 40 to 50 students.³³ Former Rocky Bar pupil-- and later, Featherville School Board member—Charles (Charlie) Price provided a colorful description of that nearby mining community's school during this era:

When I came to Rocky Bar it was a tough place and a school teacher had to be a prize fighter to hold the job. I remember the winter of 1889 and 1890 there was a school teacher by the name of Tomas Waldron. He decided that the rule of the rod was the best plan. One day in the school room one of the oldest boys tried him out. The case was indecent exposure....Mr. Waldron gave that fellow the 'doggonest' trashing I ever saw a fellow get. Pieces of those willows fell on my desk and scared the dickens out of me (I was 9 years old then). The school board had a time of it getting a teacher to carry on school properly. That teacher had the 'School Board's Authority' to rule that school and he did.³⁴

The overcrowded school conditions at Rocky Bar probably persisted until a fire destroyed most of the town in 1892. Many residents abandoned Rocky Bar for other South Boise Basin communities; after this time the former most-populous town of the region continued a steady decline toward its abandoned "ghost town" status of today.

Casey's School (District No. 14)

Still, Featherville had not yet come into being. But around 1892—perhaps as a result of the Rocky Bar fire--former Atlanta miner and Rocky Bar sawmill owner John H. Casey settled with his family to ranch and farm

³¹ U.S. General Land Office, Homestead Entry Patent for 151.9 acres, Lots 1 to 4 of Section 10, Township 3 North, Range 10 East of the Boise Meridian, Document Number 1489. Available, www.glorerecords.blm.gov.

³² Federal census records for the Featherville precinct do not record a teacher in 1910, but do in 1920.

³³ *Elmore Bulletin* (Rocky Bar: ID), September 7, 1889, 3, and June 14, 1890, 3.

³⁴ Olive Groefsema, *Elmore County: Its Historical Gleanings*, 291.

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along the South Boise Wagon Road a few miles south of Junction Bar. The Caseys soon built a one-room school house at their ranch complex (Figure 8).³⁵

During the late 1800s and early 1900s, education in Idaho was casual and only minimally regulated, especially in isolated regions like the South Boise Basin. A new district could be formed if eight families petitioned for a school and the County Superintendent or a Board of Trustees typically oversaw a school's operations.³⁶ As early as 1896, a newspaper published at Rocky Bar made passing references to summer classes being held at Casey's School.³⁷ The tradition of summer school, which had terms from four to seven months, was common in regions where winter weather was severe, and the few children living at Junction Bar may have attended Casey's School, at least in the summers, during this era.³⁸ For many years, "Casey's School House" was also the site of voting for the Junction Bar Precinct and was used for church services.³⁹ Casey's School was later designated as Elmore County School District No. 14 but had far fewer students than the Rocky Bar and Atlanta schools, with only around 10 to 15 students in the early 1900s.⁴⁰



Mountain Home Historical Museum, n.d.

Figure 8. Casey's School (District No. 14, non-extant), located a few miles south of Featherville, in the distance.

Featherville

Although prospectors and miners settled the region decades earlier, Featherville was not established until around 1910 in association with dredge mining, a new method of mineral extraction that led to a resurgence in the mining economy. Dredges were capable of excavating stream gravel deposits along a river channel and redeposited waste material in large tailings piles. Nationally, the most profitable period for dredging in the United States occurred between 1895 and 1942, at which time World War II War Production Board limitations designated gold mining a non-essential industry and most operations were forced to close.⁴¹

³⁵ Sandra Ransel and Charles Durand, "History of Pine," in *Crossroads: A History of the Elmore County Area* (Mountain Home, ID: Elmore County Historical Research Team, 1985), 101. Olive Groefsema, *Elmore County: Its Historical Gleanings*, 250-251. See also Hittle, *Buckaroo Bill Tate*, 16-17.

³⁶ Elizabeth Egleston, "Public School Buildings in Idaho," 1991.

³⁷ *Elmore Bulletin* (Rocky Bar: ID, August 12, 1896, 3; also August 18, 1897, 3.

³⁸ State law required nine-month terms beginning in 1929. Elizabeth Egleston, "Public School Buildings in Idaho," 1991.

³⁹ *Elmore Bulletin* (Rocky Bar: ID), July 28, 1898, 3; *Mountain Home Republican* (Mountain Home), August 25, 1917, 1.

⁴⁰ *Elmore County Record of School Teachers' Term Reports*, 1905-1909.

⁴¹ Sarah Elizabeth Purdy, "Analysis of Dredge Tailings Pile Patterns: Applications for Historical Archaeological Research." Master's Thesis (Corvallis, OR: Oregon State University, 2007), 24.

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Featherville's beginnings trace back to former sea captain "Cap" Rupert Winters, who came to Junction Bar in 1908 from Idaho City, where he had previously built two dredges and gained some notoriety as a mine manager and investor.⁴² According to the *State of Idaho Mining Inspector's Report* for 1910:

*The only new enterprise of any importance undertaken in the last two years, in the county, is that of the Elmore Placer Company, controlled by Rupert Winters at Junction Bar, where he has been developing 320 acres of placer ground at the junction of the Feather River with the south fork of the Boise River. The gravel is approximately forty feet deep and is to be operated by a combination hydraulic and dredge process. An immense pit has been excavated with a drain therefrom and a stationary bucket elevator installed to handle the material from the pit into a flume. The gravel is piped into the pit by the ordinary hydraulic process, the bucket ladder consists of close-connected buckets of 3 ½ cubic feet capacity. Water from the Feather River is used for sluicing and that from Cayuse Creek, under a 175 foot depth, is used for piping.*⁴³

Around 1910, Captain Winters purchased large tracts of land and the building(s) owned by Charles Crossman, and his wife, Frances, and children relocated to the area.⁴⁴ The Winters began to build up a town, first constructing a new store and hotel.⁴⁵ Winters (1910-1928) succeeded Crossman (1906-1910) as postmaster of Featherville.⁴⁶ The name "Featherville" also seems to have officially replaced "Junction Bar" around this time.⁴⁷ The family resided in a house behind the post office on the riverbank, and Frances Winters tended the store, ran the post office, raised six children, and was a member of the school board.⁴⁸ Captain Winters was well respected and *"always dressed in a white, neatly ironed shirt and dark pants, and always had a cigar in his mouth."*⁴⁹

Limited by the supply of water and winter weather, Captain Winters' Elmore Placer Company's dredging was only operable for a few months a year. During the World War I era, he focused on enlisting capital to fund a major dredging enterprise, but it was not until 1921 that Winters partnered with the South Park Dredging Company of California, headed up by Wendell Hammon. The South Park Dredging Company acquired large landholdings and leases along the rivers (including 2 miles along the Feather River and 1 mile along the South Fork Boise River), and began construction of a floating dredge—Yuba No. 51—costing over \$300,000.⁵⁰ The dredge was a 9-cubic-foot wooden hull dredge with a digging depth of 30 feet (Figures 9 and 10).⁵¹ The U.S. Geological Survey later summarized Featherville's mining history:

*Dredging in Featherville began in 1922. In 1924, the floating dredge treated 1.6 million cubic yards of gravel and was one of the largest gold dredges in Idaho, with a capacity of 4,000 yards per day. Twenty men were employed by the dredge plant, which was the largest gold producer in Idaho in the years 1924, 1926, and 1927, and second largest in intermittent years. Operations ceased in 1928. A few remains of the dredge can still be seen in a pond at the north end of Featherville. Smaller operations including the S.G. Brendel operation in 1938 and the Feather Placers from 1959 to 1961 yielded 375 ounces of gold and 126 ounces of silver combined from 36,917 tons of gravel.*⁵²

⁴² Sandra Ransel and Charles Durand, "Featherville History," and "Captain Rupert Winter Family" in *Crossroads: A History of the Elmore County Area* (Mountain Home, ID: Elmore County Historical Research Team, 1985), 69-70.

⁴³ *Annual Report of the Mining Industry of Idaho for the Year 1910*. Vol. 12 (Weiser, ID: Idaho Inspector of Mines, 1912), 11.

⁴⁴ Ransel and Durand, "Captain Rupert Winter Family", 70.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ U.S., *Appointments of U. S. Postmasters, 1832-1971*. Database online, accessed June 25, 2010, <http://ancestry.com>.

⁴⁷ The earliest use of "Featherville" found during this research effort was a passing newspaper reference to "Charles Crossman of Featherville" in *The Republican* (Mountain Home, ID), April 15, 1908, 8.

⁴⁸ Ransel and Durand, "Captain Rupert Winter Family," 70.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Spence, *A History of Gold Dredging in Idaho*, 158-161; Bennett, "The Geology and Mineral Deposits of the Hailey Quadrangle" 31.

⁵¹ George Joseph Young, "Pacific Mining News," *Engineering and Mining Journal Press*, Vol. 1-2 (May 1922): 29.

⁵² Bennett, "Geology and Mineral Deposits of the Hailey Quadrangle," 31.

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Idaho State Historical Society ISHS No. 72-112

Figure 9. Dredge tailings at Featherville with the South Park Company's dredge in the background.



Idaho State Historical Society ISHS No.63-160.217

Figure 10. Side view of the South Park Dredging Company's dredge at Featherville, ca. 1927.

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To support the South Park Company's operations, Idaho Power Company constructed a 44-kilovolt electrical transmission line from Featherville to Mountain Home. The power company also anticipated running the line from Featherville to serve mining enterprises in Rocky Bar and Atlanta, although this plan never materialized.⁵³

Featherville reached its historic peak population of 118 in 1910.⁵⁴ In contrast with the earlier Junction Bar demographics, farmers now outnumbered miners and families outnumbered single men, and there were only a handful of foreign-born residents, most from England, Scotland, Ireland, and Sweden. Seventeen children were noted in census records as having attended school in the past year. Thus, within the decade between 1910 and 1920, not only did the community's name change from Junction Bar to Featherville, but its demographic makeup transitioned from a culturally diverse, single-male, mining-oriented populace to a less diverse, increasingly ranching-oriented community comprised of more families, with more school-aged children.⁵⁵

In spite of its gold rush association, historical Featherville would be remembered as a quiet, family-friendly community that had no saloons.⁵⁶ In addition to the Winters' hotel, store, and post office, there was later the mining company office, an assay office, a residence owned by a Chinese miner named Frank Pond, the dredge machine shop, and at least five identical houses built by the mining company that had a revolving tenancy. On the opposite or north side of Pine-Featherville Road was a community hall where school classes were originally held until a snow slide destroyed a portion of the building (Figure 11).⁵⁷ Classes were then held in the back of the Winters' hotel until a new school--the Featherville School--was built.



Ransel and Durand 1985

Figure 11. School children at the former community hall (nonextant, n.d.) which also served as a school until it was destroyed by a snowslide.

⁵³ Verneta Buntin Wisecaver, *History of Featherville* (unpublished manuscript, on file, Mountain Home Historical Museum, 2009), 5.

⁵⁴ U.S. Census Office, "1910 United States Census, Junction Bar Precinct." Database online, accessed August 9, 2014, <http://ancestry.com>.

⁵⁵ U.S. Census Office, "1920 United States Census, Featherville Precinct." Database online, accessed August 9, 2014, <http://ancestry.com>.

⁵⁶ Ransel and Durand, "Featherville History," in *Crossroads: A History of the Elmore County Area*, 69.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

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Featherville School (District No. 18)

When first settled, most communities in remote areas of Idaho during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries relied on parental funding and donated labor and materials for their schools.⁵⁸ Although primary references were not found documenting the construction of the Featherville School, several details reasonably associate the school to some degree with the Rupert and Frances Winters family: they were the progenitors of the Featherville community; the land selected for the school was at the westernmost extent of the homestead purchased from Crossman; the Winters had several school-aged children; classes were held temporarily at their hotel; and Frances Winters was one of the first members of the school board.

A precise date of construction has not been determined, as alternate references suggest build dates including 1880,⁵⁹ 1889,⁶⁰ and 1920.⁶¹ Part of the confusion stems from there having been an earlier school (i.e., classes held at the community hall destroyed by the snowslide⁶² and at Casey's School near Featherville) before the Featherville School (i.e., "new school"⁶³) was built. Historic Elmore County School District ledgers first document Featherville District No. 18 in 1912, and this date of operations is currently the best evidence for the building's date of construction (Figure 12).⁶⁴ In addition to the historic context of the community's development, architectural details including materials and style support an early-twentieth century period of construction.

Featherville's population would begin a steady decline after 1910. The 1920 census for the Featherville Precinct lists 44 individuals—less than half the population of the previous decade--and 10 households, most engaged in farming and mining.⁶⁵ School attendance records reflect this pattern. The Featherville School had 17 students (including 7 boys and 10 girls) in attendance for the initial 1912 to 1913 school term, 8 of whom were between the ages of 8 and 14.⁶⁶ For this first year, Miss Frances Higgins taught a 98-day term beginning in November, making a salary of \$70.00 a month, and the school had an inventory of 43 textbooks.⁶⁷ By 1918, only five students were enrolled, but attendance rose again during the height of the South Park Dredging Company's placer mining operations of the 1920s, with the school averaging 12 students during this economically prosperous era (Table 1). Attendance would continue its downward trend after dredging abruptly ended in 1928.

⁵⁸ Elizabeth Egleston, "Public School Buildings in Idaho," 1991.

⁵⁹ According to the Elmore County Tax Assessor's Office, which notes this information was provided by the Mountain Home School District. The Mountain Home School District was contacted by telephone and indicated that the district archives might have information but that such historical records have not been inventoried and would be difficult to access. Based on census data and historical maps and homestead entries, there does not appear to have been a sufficient population to have supported construction of a designated school building during the 1880s to 1890s, and the 1906 U.S. General Land Office plat (Figure 7) depicts only a saloon in this area.

⁶⁰ Marlene McCoy, "Featherville School," 19A.

⁶¹ Carl Hamilton, "Oh, Come to the Church in the Wildwood," n.d., n.p.

⁶² Ransel and Durand, "Featherville History," 69.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Elmore County, *Record of Teachers Contracts (1904-1907)* and *Record of School Teachers Term Reports (1898-1926)*.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Elmore County, *Record of School Teachers Term Reports, 1898-1926*.

⁶⁷ In 1913, for most rural districts of Idaho, the prevailing salary was \$65.00 and the length of term eight months; in the mountainous regions salaries were typically lower, \$55.00 to \$60.00, the terms were shorter, and teachers were more difficult to retain. *Biennial Report of the State Board of Education and Board of Regents of the University of Idaho*, Volumes 1-3 (Boise, ID: State Board of Education, 1914), 197-199. Online reference, accessed August 15, 2018, <http://books.google.com>.

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DISTRICT No. 18 Featherville									
RECORD OF WARRANTS AND ORDERS COUNTERSIGNED									
Date of Warrant Mo. Day Year		No. of Warrant	To Whom Drawn	For What Purpose	Countersigned Mo. Day Yr.	Form of Warrant	Total		
Dec. 15	1912	4	Miss Frances Higgins	Teaching	Dec. 16 1912	7000	-		
" 13	"	1	Daniel Wootan	15 lbs stove wood	" 24 "	3000	-		
" "	"	3	Willie Bichel	Janitor	Jan 9 1913	500	-		
" "	"	2	Thomas Sturt	mining & 24 for wood	" " "	1200	-		
Jan 25	"	6	Boise Book & Music Co	School Books	" 29 1913	2860	-		
Jan 25	1913	7	Frances Higgins	Teaching	" " "	7000	-		
" 14	"	5	Mr. Rupert Winters	School Supplies	Feb. 10 "	995	-		
Feb. 17	"	8	Frances Higgins	Teaching	" 21 "	7000	-	1105	
Mar. 22	"	9	Frances Higgins	Teaching	Mar. 26 "	7000	-	1805	
Apr. 3	"	10	Boise Book & Stationery	School Books	Apr. 9 "	285	-	2090	
" 21	"	11	Frances Higgins	Teaching	" 25 "	7000	-	2790	
" "	"	12	Willie Bichel	Four months as Janitor	May 6 "	2000	-	4790	
Jan 1	1914	14	Miss Thora Carlson	Teaching	Jan. 5 1914	7000	-		
" 18	"	15	Boise Book & Stationery Co.	School Books	" 22 "	2821	-		
" 11	"	16	Roscoe W. Smith	School Books	" 24 "	400	-	10231	
Jan 1	"	13	Teddy Heath	Janitor	Feb. 13 "	500	-		
Feb. 10	"	17	Miss Thora Carlson	Teaching	" 20 "	7000	-		
" 17	"	18	Heifrich Merc. Co.	Adv. freight on school supplies	" " "	3020	-		
Mar. -	"	19	Thora Carlson	Teaching	Mar. " "	7000	-		
Apr. 16	"	20	Thora Carlson	Teaching	Apr. 23 1914	7000	-		
Apr. 27	"	23	Boise Book & Music Co	School Books	May 8 1914	1500	-		
May 6	"	26	Rupert Winters	School Supplies	" " "	7835	-		
Apr. 27	"	21	Miss Thora Carlson	Teaching	" " "	7000	-		
" "	"	25	John Baumgartner	3 Cord. wood	May 9 "	915	-		
May 6	"	24	James Stevens	Janitor on school supplies	May 17 "	1465	-		
Apr. 27	"	22	Teddy Heath	Janitor's board	" " "	2000	-	14731	

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Figure 12. The Elmore County Record of Teachers Contracts first references Featherville District No. 18 in 1912.

Table 1. Featherville School Average Attendance for Years 1912-1926, at the height of dredge mining.⁶⁸

Year	No. of Students
1912-1913	17
1914-1915	9
1916-1917	6
1918-1919	5
1920-1921	11
1922-1923	14
1924-1925	9
1926	12

In 1918, the Elmore Board of County Commissioners created an Independent School District, absorbing schools in locations including Atlanta, Rocky Bar, Pine, and Featherville, and the school district began

⁶⁸ Elmore County, Record of Teachers Contracts (1904-1907) and Record of School Teachers Term Reports (1898-1926).

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consolidation efforts.⁶⁹ However, although the two one-room schools were only 3 miles apart, Casey's School District No. 14 continued to operate at the same time as Featherville School District No. 18 for about 13 years, until the late 1920s.⁷⁰ Both school districts were associated with Featherville, but Casey's School seems to have served the more dispersed ranching families between Featherville and Pine, while the Featherville School served residents within the small community itself.

From 1915 to 1920, the school Board of Trustees included Featherville residents Mrs. Frances L. Winters, B.J. Nordyke (former Rocky Bar mail carrier who ran the Winters' store), Ed N. Stone, S.E. Smith, and H.B. Howland.⁷¹ Casey's School District Officers and Trustees from 1907 to 1921⁷² included various Pine and Featherville residents such as Mrs. John Casey, Lou Roberts, B.J. Nordyke, William Brothers, Mr. and Mrs. J. N. Johnson, Mrs. Ada Nicholson, Mrs. Harriet Price, Mr. Charles Price, Guy S. Heath, and Mrs. Ella Hyde.⁷³ Some residents served in various capacities to support both the Casey's and Featherville Schools, illustrating the interconnectedness of the Pine-Featherville region.

The Featherville School reported 11 students in attendance in 1920 while Casey's had seven, and classes were held through the fall, winter, and spring months at both schools during this era.⁷⁴ Teachers for both Casey's and the Featherville School now earned \$125.00 a month. By the mid-1920s, Casey's School still only had about seven students in attendance, but classes were held with less regularity. The school seems to have stopped operating circa 1927, and former Casey's School students likely attended the Featherville School after this time.

Most teachers during this era were women, both single and married, who traveled to different schools on an annual basis. A regional shortage of teachers in remote areas like the South Boise Basin had *"more schools needing teachers than there were teachers willing to go out into the far reaches of the western rural scene to teach them."*⁷⁵ Vacancies were posted in newspapers throughout the Northwest and a week-long Teacher's Institute for Southern Idaho was held annually in Boise in September.⁷⁶ Teachers typically boarded with school board members in rural districts, and it is likely in the case of the Featherville School that they boarded at the Winters' hotel.

A preliminary list compiled of teachers for the Featherville and nearby Casey's Schools illustrates the high rate of annual turnover (Table 2).

⁶⁹ Mountain Home School District. "Mountain Home School District 193: Mountain Home School District History." Online reference, accessed April 1, 2018, www.mtnhomesd.org/mhsd-history.html.

⁷⁰ Elmore County, *Record of Teachers' Contracts*, 1904-1907, and *Record of School Teachers Term Reports*, 1898-1926.

⁷¹ Marlene McCoy, "Featherville School," 19A.

⁷² Elmore County, *Register of School District Officers and Appointments, District No. 14*, p. 16-17.

⁷³ Elmore County, *Record of Teachers' Contracts, District No. 14*, p. 95-96.

⁷⁴ Based on months that salaries were paid to teachers as listed in: Elmore County, *Records and Warrants and Orders Countersigned*, 1912-1919. On file, Mountain Home Historical Museum.

⁷⁵ Lucy Sophia Ransom and Jay Ellis Ransom. "Country Schoolma'am." *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 87, no. 3 (Fall 1986):288-289.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

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Table 2. Featherville School and Casey's School Teachers (incomplete list)⁷⁷

Casey's School District No. 14 (Featherville)	Featherville School District No. 18 (Featherville)
Miss May Belle Howard (1904, 1906, 1907)	Frances Higgins (1912-1913)
Huldah Nelson (1905)	Thora Gulson (1914-1915)
Chloe Hibbs (1908)	Hazel Reid (1915-1916)
Julia Von Wertz (1909)	Cloye Burt (1916-1917)
Buelah Coates (1910)	A.E. Holland (1918)
Mary Adams (1910)	Nancy Watts (1918)
Agnes Feen (1911, 1912)	Edna Morrison (1919)
Mrs. Eirie Verbeck (1913-1914)	Mrs. J.W. Davis (1919)
Thora Gulson (1914)	Miss Anna McLaughlin (1920)
Hester Spackman (1915-1916)	Bernice Bjornson (1920-1921)
Lucy Lafferty (1916)	Annalis Pakenham (1921-1922)
Mrs. B.H. Lovelace (1916)	Alita Larsen (1922-1923)
Lillian Cannell (1917)	Laura Bucklin (1923-1924)
Nellie Davidson (1917)	Mrs. Ruth Reid (1924-1925)
Edna Huckabee (1917)	Alita Larsen (1925-1926)
Florence Webster (1919)	<i>[Information not found for years 1927-1929; the school may have been closed these years]</i>
Ruth Miller (1920-1921)	Ada B. Cobbett (1930-1931)
Gertruda Schlechter (1922-1923)	Mrs. H.C. Myers (1931-1932)
<i>[No school 1923-1924]</i>	Mary K. Dodds (1933-1934)
Helen Taylor (1924-1925)	Cora Buntin (1935-1937, 1940-1941)
Lena Meyer (1925-1926)	Mrs. Luella Lowell (1938-1940)
	<i>[Information not found for years 1942-1951]</i>
	Mary K. Dodds (1952-1953)
	Ann Fay (1954, 1956)
	Alice Hicks (1955)

Originally from the East Coast, Lucy Adams came to teach at the Pine school in 1909-1910 (Figure 13) and her sister Mary Adams taught summer school at Casey's (Table 2). Both sisters soon married and moved elsewhere, but nearly 40 years later, Lucy would revisit the area, recalling her brief but memorable time as a "school ma'am" along the South Fork Boise River and describing the state of the mining communities and the economic setting into which the Featherville School was built:

The mine and mill [Franklin Mine at Pine] were all but abandoned by that time [1910], and when that mine closed down for good late that fall, it ended the same frontier era that folded in over Silver City [Idaho] months earlier. It wasn't so much, perhaps, that the gold ore actually ran out, but all around Pine mining claims overlapped one another. Much litigation, some of it going back twenty or thirty years or more, had brought almost all prospecting and mine development work to a standstill. About twelve miles farther up the narrowing valley lay another gold-mining camp, Featherville, where placer mining with huge dredges had turned the riverbed and valley into a wasteland of tailing piles.

Twenty miles north of Pine lay the old mining camp of Rocky Bar. In order to halt the vast confusion of litigation, here nearly all the mines had been allowed to fill up with seepage water, thereby preventing anybody from entering the tunnels or shafts to estimate ore values. The Rocky Bar mines had been closed for many years, and the camp itself barely managed to remain alive. A few Chinese continued to wash gold out of the old sluice boxes along the river and tributary creeks in a desultory sort of way. This activity was soon to end completely.

⁷⁷ Sources include: Marlene McCoy, "Featherville School," 2010; Verneta Buntin Wisecaver, "History of Featherville," 2009; Elmore County School District Ledgers including: *Record of Teachers Contracts* (1904-1907) and *Record of School Teachers Term Reports* (1898-1926); Idaho State Historical Society (ISHS) Manuscript (MS) 462 Foley Burnell Abbott Collection: "Report cards and graduation announcements" and "Featherville School District Records (1936-1940)."

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From Rocky Bar the stagecoach wound for sixteen miles over an 8,000-foot summit and steeply down the far side into Atlanta, the end of the line from Mountain Home. Atlanta was a larger, more prosperous mining camp still engaged in the production of gold. During the long, cold winters, as in Silver City, Atlanta was completely cut off from the outside by that high mountain pass under deep snows. An occasional rare traveler on snowshoes or skis crossed the summit in winter, when avalanches were a continual threat along crucial portions of the trail...

I experienced life at a crossroads in western history, when a long pioneer era was drawing to its close. Evidences of the Wild West period of rugged adventurous living were still everywhere, alive but nostalgic, as the old-timers I met talked vividly about the early days, still fresh in their memories. Their driving forces had become rather moribund, it is true, and in place of vigilante law had come reasonably civilized law and order. But more important, perhaps, was that even in the most remote and isolated ranching and mining country a few well-educated people had come, bringing some degree of culture and refinement...no longer was the country schoolma'am the only cultivated person trying to enlighten a ruffian, rapsallion populace." ⁷⁸



Oregon Historical Society OrHi 75836

Figure 13. Contemporary of the Featherville School around the time of its construction, the former Pine Grammar School where Lucy Adams taught was the only two-story school house in the South Boise Basin, with the second floor used as a community dance hall (ca. 1910, non-extant).

DEPRESSION ERA (LATE-1920s-1930s)

While at least 20 men were employed during the 1920s period of intense mining by the California-based South Park Dredging Company, these individuals do not appear to have put down roots in the community. Operations abruptly ceased in 1928 when the placer deposits had been exhausted; the dredge was dismantled and parts were sent to Nome, Alaska.⁷⁹ Just two years later, in 1930 there were only 31 Featherville residents representing 12 households, with 8 men active in the mining industry and only 4 school-aged children.⁸⁰

Some school records have been lost over time and it is unclear whether the Featherville School operated every year or if there was a hiatus during the latter part of the 1920s after the dredging ended. Foley Orlando Abbott Jr. (b.1893, d.1969) and Estella Sarah Montgomery Abbott (b. 1895, d.1968), along with their school-aged sons Foley Burnell (b. 1922, d. 2008) and George (b. 1921, d. 1977), were a ranching family who resided 2 miles south of Featherville. Despite their proximity to Featherville, at least in 1928, the Abbott boys attended the school at Pine. The 10-mile long trip from Featherville to Pine by horse and wagon took the better part of a

⁷⁸ Ransom and Ransom, "Country Schoolma'am," 296-300.

⁷⁹ Ransel and Durand, *Crossroads*, "Featherville", 69.

⁸⁰ U.S. Census Office, "1930 United States Census, Featherville Precinct." Database online, accessed August 9, 2014, <http://ancestry.com>.

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day, such that they lived with a cousin while attending school there.⁸¹ The Abbott boys resumed attending the Featherville School by the early 1930s, and continued to do so until reaching the eighth grade, after which time students were required to attend high school in a larger community such as Mountain Home or Boise. These two generations of the Abbott family would continue to maintain an association with the school by serving as elected officials from the 1930s up until its closing.⁸²

Captain Winters, mine promoter and founder of Featherville, died in 1932 at the age of 69.⁸³ Like many of the other original families present at the time of the town's--and the school's-- establishment, the rest of the Winters family seems to have sold out and left Featherville shortly after the South Park Dredging Company's activities ceased and as the Great Depression took root. Of the early South Boise Basin mining communities, only Atlanta would prosper during the Depression years as a result of a new gold quartz recovery process;⁸⁴ in comparison with Featherville's handful of students, its school had around 45 students in attendance.⁸⁵

Although the Brendal Corporation renewed placer mining operations at Featherville in the late 1930s, overall production was minimal compared to previous dredging.⁸⁶ The timber industry was revitalized, however, in 1937, when David Stokesberry built a sawmill in Featherville, employing about 12 to 14 men. The work was seasonal, with most of the crew moving out around December and coming back as soon as the roads were reopened after the winter snows, usually in April.⁸⁷

The Featherville School remained operational during this era, although local residents apparently struggled to make sure the school had an attendance of at least seven, the minimum number of students required to keep it open.⁸⁸ Cora Buntin came to Featherville to teach school from 1935 to 1937, making what she considered to be a notably good salary of \$75.00 per month--even though it was \$50.00 less than the teachers' salary of the previous decade. At the time, the school was in danger of having to close due to a lack of students. That Mrs. Buntin had three school-aged children, Roy, Verneta, and Leta, was a benefit to the community. School teacher Mrs. Luella Lowell replaced Mrs. Buntin for the 1938 to 1940 terms and her two young sons, Duane and Dickie, similarly attended the school.

With snow so deep the roads would be closed for months, few people were willing to remain isolated for the long winters in Featherville. Edna Lucille Stokesberry, a divorced mother of two young girls, Patty and Barbara, was working as a cook in her father's new sawmill when the Abbotts asked her to stay through the winter of 1938 so that the school could stay open:

During the summer Mrs. Abbott came up and asked if I would consider staying in all winter and sending the girls to school there. I asked her what I would do if one of them got sick. She said, "They won't. After the roads close and the people quit coming in they won't be exposed to the flu and to colds." So I decided to stay. Also they needed the girls in order to have an average attendance of 7 plus. There were Betty and Joe Felts at the hotel, Gene Walthall from the sawmill and the teacher's two boys, Duane and Dickie Lowell...I got the job as janitor for the school house for \$20.00 a month. My father had his men saw up wood and fill the wood shed. We went out to Twin [Falls] and I bought clothes and groceries to last until spring. A bachelor neighbor, Frankie Jackson made us each a pair of

⁸¹ Foley Abbott, "First School (About 1928)," unpublished manuscript, on file, Mountain Home Historical Museum.

⁸² Idaho State Historical Society MS 562 Foley Burnell Abbott Collection, "Report cards and graduation announcements" and "Featherville School District Records (1936-1940)."

⁸³ Rupert (d. 1932) and Frances Winters (d. 1953) are buried at the Pioneer Cemetery in Boise. Database online, accessed June 25, 2015, www.findagrave.com.

⁸⁴ W.A. Golder, "Rocky Bar and Atlanta in 1876," *Idaho Yesterdays* 17, no. 1 (Spring 1973):20.

⁸⁵ Ed Gilbert Burnet (b. 1924), Atlanta School former student (1929-1933), telephone interview with Sarah McDaniel, July 17, 2018.

⁸⁶ Bennett, "Geology and Mineral Deposits of the Hailey Quadrangle," 31.

⁸⁷ Edna Lucille Calvert, "Recollections of her life at Featherville," unpublished manuscript, 1988. In Verneta Buntin Wisecaver, "History of Featherville," 2009.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

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*skis—the only way we could get around with the snow six feet deep. The kids stayed well all winter. After school we would all gather and go skiing for awhile. Then after our evening meal Duane and Dickie would come over and I'd read to the four kids...*⁸⁹

Just a handful of people settled in that winter along with Edna Stokesberry and her daughters, including the widow Mrs. Felts of the hotel along with her mother and two children, the Abbotts, teacher Mrs. Lowell and her family, and bachelor Frank Jackson (Figure 14).⁹⁰



McCoy Family Collection

Figure 14. Featherville School teacher Mrs. Luella Lowell and resident Frank Jackson who helped with school tasks such as firewood, n.d., ca. 1940.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Edna Lucille Calvert, "Too much snow: Woman, 76, tells of winter days in early Featherville," *Mountain Home News*, November 24, 1983, A9.

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WORLD WAR II AND THE POST-WAR ERA (1940s-1950s)

By 1940, Featherville had a population of only 17 individuals representing seven households, and for the first time in the town's recorded history, no one was engaged in the mining industry.⁹¹ School terms were nine months long, and the teacher's salary was \$100.00 a month. School trustees in the early 1940s included three community members, alternating between Charlie Price, Charlie Baker, Foley Abbott, Estella Abbott, D.C. Hughes, and Nancy Felts.⁹²

Edna Stokesberry married resident Tom Calvert, and the Stokesberry-Calvert girls continued to attend the Featherville School along with the Abbotts, teacher Cora Buntin who had returned for the 1940-1941 school year with her children, and the Walthalls from the sawmill (Figures 15 and 16). Bachelor Charlie Price, the former Rocky Bar school student who as an adult settled at "Price's Plunge" (now known as Paradise Hot Springs) and later Pine, maintained an affiliation with both the Featherville and Casey's Schools on the school board and as an election official for many years (Figure 15).⁹³



ISHS Foley Abbott Collection MS 462

Figure 15. Featherville School class of 1941 on the front porch of the school.

Back row: George Abbott, Patty Calvert, Roy Buntin, Verneta Buntin, unknown, unknown.

Middle row: Unknown, unknown, Leta Buntin, Charlie Price.

Front Row: Barbara Calvert, unknown, Eugene Walthall, Kenneth Walthall, unknown, unknown (as identified in Wisecaver, 2009).

⁹¹ Edna Lucille Calvert, unpublished manuscript, 1988.

⁹² Idaho State Historical Society MS 462 Foley Abbott Collection.

⁹³ Verneta Buntin Wisecaver, "History of Featherville," 14.

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ISHS Foley Abbott Collection MS 462

Figure 16. Teacher Cora Buntin in front of the Featherville School, 1941.

After Featherville's mining economy collapsed and as automobile transportation became more accessible in the post-World War II era, year-round residency yielded to more seasonal use. Recreation emerged as the primary economy and continues to dominate the economy of the Pine-Featherville region today.

Tom and Edna Calvert purchased the old Winters' store in the late 1940s, converting it for use as a residence.⁹⁴ During the post-war years, winter weather and limited economic opportunities continued to inhibit residency, and the Calverts were now the only family that lived year-round in Featherville, with their nearest neighbors living at Paradise 4 miles away (*"might as well be 40 when the snow is that deep"*).⁹⁵ They made their living by working at the sawmill during the summers and "kept sane" during the winters by feeding herds of elk and deer. Winter travel was limited to skiing and occasional mail delivery by a horse-drawn toboggan, which was replaced by a Sno-Cat machine in later years. Classes at the Featherville School were now held less than three months per year because all other residents left for the winters.

Although Idaho Power Company had constructed an electrical power line from Featherville to Mountain Home to support the dredging operations of the 1920s, electricity was not widely accessible until after 1951, when Prairie Power Cooperative constructed a power line to Featherville.⁹⁶ Up until this time, candles, kerosene, and white gas table lanterns were the primary lighting sources in the South Boise communities.⁹⁷ The Calverts

⁹⁴ Edna Calvert, "Too much snow," A9.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Foley Abbott, "First School (About 1928)", unpublished manuscript.

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had the former store wired with electricity, but winter service was still unreliable because the poles would break and could not be repaired until the spring. In spite of its availability, the Featherville School was never modernized with electrical power or running water.

Charles (Charlie) and Nita (Hucker) Baker (b. 1910-d. 2003) purchased the former store building from the Calverts in 1952 and converted it from a residence back into a store (Figure 17). Charlie Baker had originally come to Featherville to test mine for gold for the Brendal Corporation in the 1930s.⁹⁸ During the summers, the Bakers' elementary school aged-daughters Marlene (b. 1942-d. 2011) and Donna (b. 1944-d. 2011) attended the Featherville School and helped run the store.⁹⁹ The Bakers built a new motel between the old store and hotel by the mid-1950s and opened a café, operating the business for 16 years. After a series of subsequent owners, the renovated store and motel complex, which was the sole commercial heart of the community, was entirely demolished by the 1990s, leaving the Featherville School and a handful of small cabins as the only buildings from the era of the town's founding that remain today.



Calvert article, Mountain Home News, November 24, 1983

Figure 17. The former store built by Featherville founder Captain Rupert Winters ca. 1910, as it appeared about 1954 (non-extant). The Featherville School and a few cabins are now all that remain from the town's founding era.

The School Closes

During the early 1950s, classes were only held for about three months during the summers and early fall.¹⁰⁰ The State did not financially support part-time teachers, so Featherville families with school children paid the salary of the teacher and provided room and board at the hotel.¹⁰¹ The Elmore County Superintendent wrote of the situation to the State Board of Education in a request for increased funding for the school during the fall of 1954:

District 18 Trustees now find it advisable to hold a two or three-month school term this fall, since some 16 children will be there until winter closes in, and the families subsequently move to their various winter locations. Some of the mothers will move to their various winter locations when the school starts. Most will not, and the children will miss out. If it follows the usual pattern this year, we are

⁹⁸ Verneta Buntin Wisecaver, "History of Featherville," 14.

⁹⁹ "Obituary: Nita Baker, 93," *Mountain Home News*, November 26, 2003, <https://www.mountainhomenews.com/story/1056295.html>; "Obituary: Marlene McCoy," *Mountain Home News*, January 24, 2011, <https://www.mountainhomenews.com/story/1697515.html>; "Obituary: Donna Brower," *Mountain Home News*, July 12, 2011, <https://www.mountainhomenews.com/story/1743510.html>.

¹⁰⁰ Idaho State Department of Education, *Form S.D.E. 650-3. Annual Report from July 1, 1954 through June 30, 1955*. On file, Mountain Home Historical Museum.

¹⁰¹ Nita Mildred Hucker Baker, "Family History," unpublished autobiography. In possession of John McCoy, Featherville, Idaho. n.d.

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informed here of the children who are still "out in the brush," so we start proceedings through the sheriff, and the probate judge issues orders to the parents to appear for hearings, etc. this all takes time, and by the time we have enforced the compulsory education law, the time has necessarily elapsed, and the parents have achieved what they intended in the first place – not to move until their work ceased for the fall at the lumber mill, mine, or in whatever the father is working.

It was the trustee's intention to avoid this lapse in the children's education, by supplying a local school for the period this fall... On August 12, Mr. Baker and a proposed teacher were in the state office conferring about her permit, and he quoted someone there as saying the state department would do all it could to help them have the school. One year before they ran such a school, and the parents paid for it all out of their own pockets, which does not seem quite feasible with so many children anticipated now."¹⁰²

In spite of this intervention, the one-room Featherville School would close its doors after the 1956 school session.¹⁰³ Because enrollment dropped below five students, the school was permanently closed.¹⁰⁴ The building had an assessed valuation of \$33,270, and George Abbott and Charlie Baker served as School District Clerk and Chairman at the time of its closure (Figure 18).¹⁰⁵ Thereafter, residents sent their school-aged children to attend classes at the one-room school house at Pine.



Mountain Home Historical Museum

Figure 18. Former students George (left) and Foley (right) Abbott in 1957, shortly after the school's closure.

¹⁰² Mrs. Elma M. Goodman, Elmore County Superintendent, letter to Mr. R.M.D. Childs, Assistant Finance Officer, State Board of Education, Boise, Idaho. August 19, 1954. On file, Mountain Home Historical Museum.

¹⁰³ Marlene McCoy, "Featherville School," 19A.

¹⁰⁴ Carl Hamilton, "Oh, Come to the Church in the Wildwood."

¹⁰⁵ Idaho State Department of Education Form S.D.E. 650-7. Annual report from July 1, 1958 through June 30, 1959. On file, Mountain Home Historical Museum.

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A former student of the 1950s, Marlene Baker McCoy later reminisced about her days at the Featherville School:¹⁰⁶

The Featherville School is built on a lot overlooking the South Boise River. It has one room, a hall along the front and a small porch. A bell is atop the roof in the small belfry. It has rung for many occasions for many years, calling children to be on time for school, to declare recess over, or time to come in for lunch. It has rung for church services and weddings. There was a "wood shed" in the back which was used to store wood to keep it out of the snow. It was burned in a "pot bellied stove" to heat the school. There were also two more buildings out back. They were the rest rooms. They sported two holes each as well as spiders, flies and sometimes snakes. Lime was sprinkled on the "out houses" once a week to keep the odor down.

All eight grades were taught in this small school. The teacher was responsible for the janitor work as well as building a fire in the morning so the students would have a warm place to arrive, since most of them either walked or skied to school. Some rode horses if the weather was good enough. Winters were very snowy and cold. Most of the time the students brought lunches in lard pails or lunch boxes. When it was very cold the teacher would put soup or beans on to cook atop the pot-bellied stove so the students could have a hot lunch. School was dismissed for a full hour at noon. There was a fifteen minute recess both in the morning and afternoon. The school day began at 9:00 am and ended at 4:00 pm. Occasionally a field day, track meet or contest was held between the Pine and Featherville Schools.

MODERN ERA (1960s-PRESENT)

Church of the Wildwood

After its closure, the Featherville School was eventually used as a snowmobilers' meeting house, then for storage, until it became repurposed as the "Church of the Wildwood." William (Bill) W. (b. 1917-d. 2001) and Mae Gette (b. 1923-d. 2011) Sanders of Mountain Home established the Church of the Wildwood as a non-denominational Christian ministry in the 1970s. The Sanders owned an insurance agency in Mountain Home and spent weekends at their cabin in Featherville. Wanting the community to have a place to worship, they began to lease the school building for religious services. Mae became an ordained minister, and each Sunday from Memorial Day to Labor Day, Bill would ring the school bell before services, and Mae would preach, accompanied by Nita Baker on the piano for more than 30 years (Figures 19 and 20).¹⁰⁷

Sunday school was taught for many years by residents Betty Shepherd and Marlene Baker McCoy, one of the last pupils of the Featherville School. After their retirement, the Sanders were succeeded by Lowell and Kathy Schuknecht of Boise from 2006 to 2015. Local residents continue to lease the building, conduct maintenance, and seasonally hold church services and weddings within the former school.

¹⁰⁶ Marlene McCoy (b. 1942, d. 2011) provided this information about the school to the Mountain Home Historical Museum in 2010 with the intent of getting the building listed on the National Register of Historic Places. She met her future husband, John McCoy, in grade school after the Featherville School closed and she began attending the Pine School. John McCoy, who has resided in the Pine-Featherville region since 1948, continues to maintain the school building and is part of the Church of the Wildwood board.

¹⁰⁷ "Obituary: Nita Baker, 93," *Mountain Home News*, November 26, 2003.

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On Display, Church of the Wildwood

Figure 19. Mae Sanders of Mountain Home, founder and minister of the Church of the Wildwood, in 1991.



On Display, Church of the Wildwood

Figure 20. Nita Baker playing the piano in the Church of the Wildwood in 2001. Nita played during church services held within the former school building for more than 30 years. She and her husband Charlie, a mining foreman, moved to Featherville in 1952 after purchasing the Featherville Store and Motel. Their daughters were the last students to attend the Featherville School, they provided seasonal housing for teachers in their motel, and Charlie Baker was the last member of the school board when the school was permanently closed.

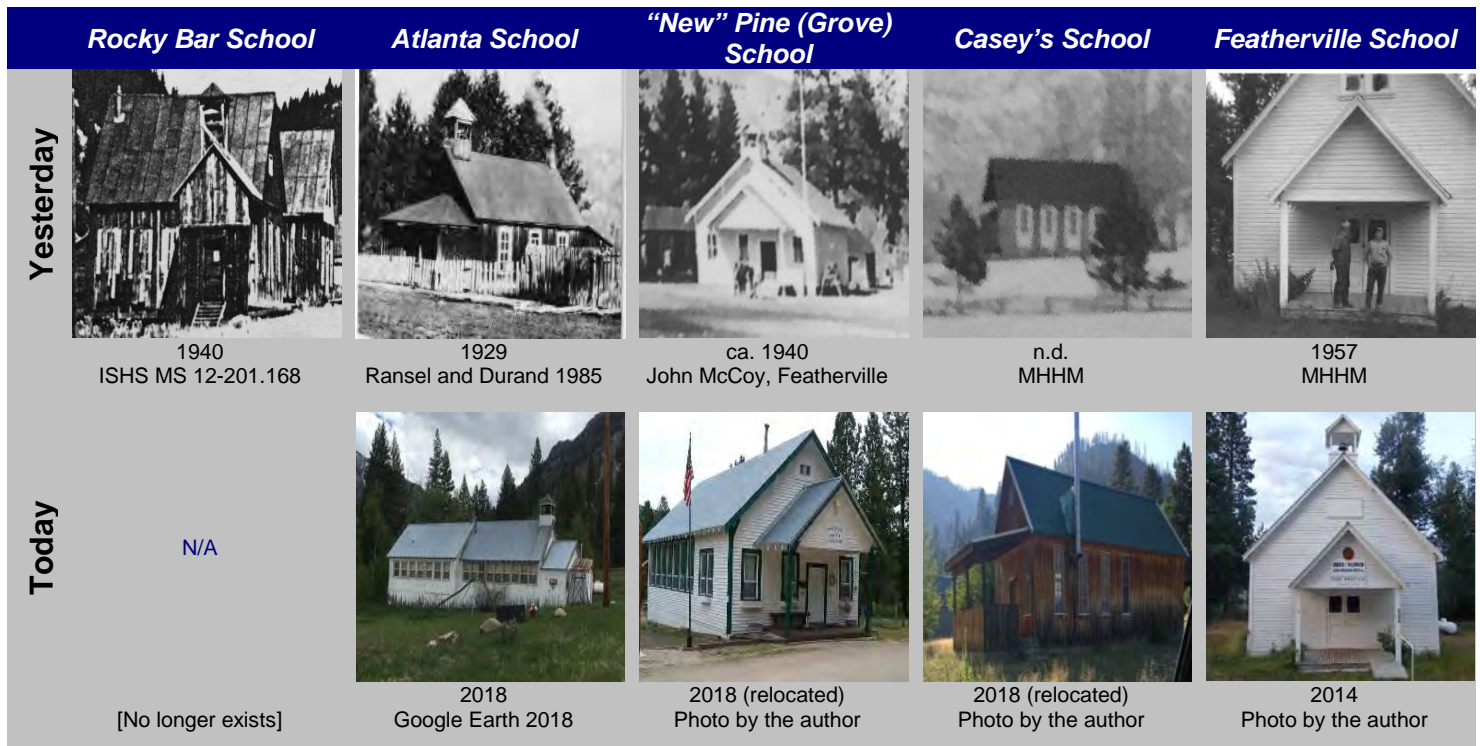
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YESTERDAY AND TODAY: ONE-ROOM SCHOOL HOUSES OF ROCKY BAR, ATLANTA, PINE, AND FEATHERVILLE

At the time of the Featherville School's construction ca. 1912, nearly a third (5 out of 18) of Elmore County's school districts were operating in the connected mining communities of Pine, Featherville, Rocky Bar, and Atlanta.¹⁰⁸ Architectural styles of the school houses illustrate the unique style of each community, having been built and operated by local residents during different eras (Figures 21 and 22). Schools were established first at Rocky Bar and Atlanta by the 1870s, followed by Pine and Casey's Ranch just south of Featherville in the 1890s, and finally at Featherville in the early 1910s. Fires destroyed some of the earliest school buildings in Rocky Bar and Pine, and an avalanche destroyed Featherville's community hall where classes were held prior to the Featherville School's construction. When replacement buildings were constructed, they espoused various non-standardized styles.

Of these schools, the Featherville School and the existing Pine School are most stylistically similar in plan, size, and architectural style. The Pine School was relocated to higher ground in the 1950s in conjunction with construction of Anderson Ranch Dam, which created a reservoir that flooded the historic town site of Pine Grove.¹⁰⁹ Prior to its relocation, the Pine School building had a similar bell cupola (Figure 21). However, window placement is distinctly different, and bracket ornamentation along the eaves differs, giving the Featherville and Pine schools overall similar, yet distinct, appearances.¹¹⁰



*Notes: ISHS = Idaho State Historical Society; MHM = Mountain Home Historical Museum

Figure 21. Yesterday (top row) and today (bottom row): Architecture of one-room school houses between Pine and Atlanta. The diversity in school house architecture in historic mining communities of the South Boise Basin reflects different eras of construction and community preferences that changed over time.

¹⁰⁸ Elmore County, *Record of Teachers Contracts* (1904-1907) and *Record of School Teachers Term Reports* (1898-1926).

¹⁰⁹ William Joe Simonds, *The Boise Project*. (Denver, CO: Bureau of Reclamation History Program, 2009).

¹¹⁰ The architectural style of the Pine School is similar to standardized School Plan No. 1 in the Idaho State Board of Education's "School House Plans: One and Two-room Buildings" (1918).

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Today, the Atlanta School is part of the Atlanta National Historic District. The building is owned by Mountain Home School District No. 193 but is no longer used as a school. Rocky Bar, also a National Register District, is now a ghost town with only a few buildings still standing; its school building no longer exists. Casey's School was moved from its original location a couple of miles downriver and is in private ownership, used as a recreational cabin with modern amenities.¹¹¹ The relocated Pine School, which has been upgraded with running water and electricity, is the only historical school house in this region that remains a fully functioning school as part of the Mountain Home School District. The Featherville School is also owned by the School District but has been leased and maintained by local community members for over 40 years.

Additional research may clarify historical associations between the one-room school houses that served children living in the mining communities in this remote region of Elmore County, Idaho. While each of the existing school houses retains important historical associations and distinctive architectural appearances, the Featherville School has an exceptional degree of integrity because it has never been moved from its original location and because modern upgrades have been minimal.

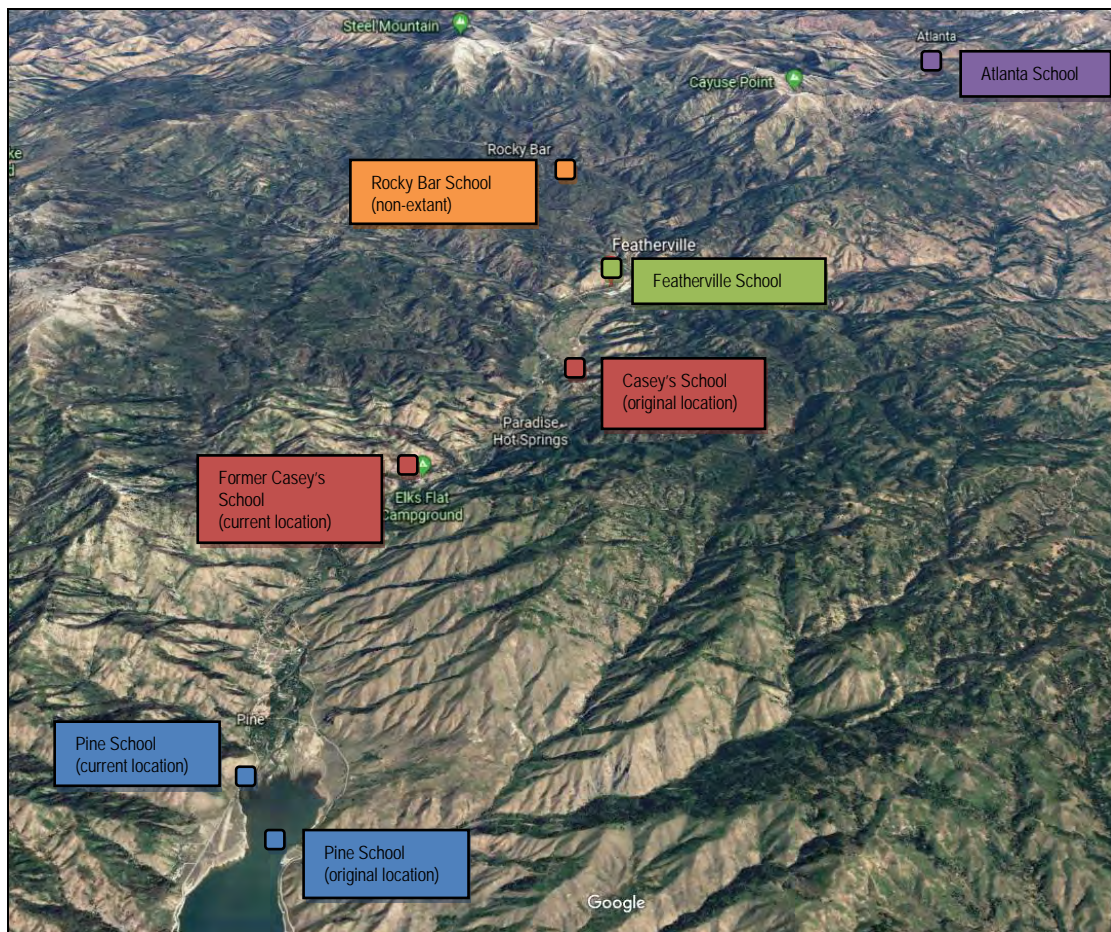


Figure 22. Approximate former and current locations of one-room school houses between Pine and Atlanta along the South Fork Boise River, with Anderson Ranch Reservoir at bottom left.

¹¹¹ The former one-room Casey's School, later known as the "Raleigh Colson Cabin" was moved approximately 15 years ago from its location at Schoolhouse Gulch (see 1964 U.S.G.S. Featherville Quadrangle [1:24:000] Township 3 North, Range 10 East, Section 28), about 2.5 miles south to an area across from the U.S. Forest Service's Elk's Flat Campground (Township 2 North, Range 10 East, Section 5). Personal interview with John McCoy, long-time Featherville resident, August 24, 2017.

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SUMMARY

The rise and decline of Featherville and its school reflect economic and educational norms in Idaho during the early-twentieth century. As the initial transient, gold-rush demographic yielded to more stable settlements comprised of more families, elementary school education became a priority. One-room school houses were the standard in rural Elmore County and in the mountain communities of the South Boise Basin, with each community constructing schools in their own unique architectural style.

During the early 1900s, children residing in Featherville were first educated in a community hall and temporarily in a hotel until local residents built the Featherville School around 1912, in conjunction with the town's founding and the beginnings of a dredge mining boom. The Featherville School served a small number of students, ranging from 5 to 17 and averaging only 12 students per year even during Featherville's most prosperous dredge mining era of the 1920s, after which time school attendance gradually declined. The teachers, all women, were well paid but rarely stayed in Featherville beyond a single school year.

Dredge mining ended in 1928 at the onset of the Great Depression, and the school's operation and length of school terms appears to have become less regular as many residents moved elsewhere. Around this same time, the nearby one-room Casey's School (District No. 14), which pre-dated the Featherville School by more than a decade, ceased operating altogether; its students likely then attended the Featherville School.

During the 1930s, modest lumber and ranching enterprises sustained the community, which struggled to keep the Featherville School operational with a minimum number of students. World War II further affected the South Boise Basin due to prohibitions on gold mining and a shortage of manpower, and year-round residency transitioned to seasonal and recreational use. As a result, Featherville School operations were reduced from full nine-month terms to seasonal terms only during the Post-War era. The school closed after the 1956 summer session because there were insufficient children to keep it open. After its closure, students attended the one-room school house at Pine, which is still operational as part of Mountain Home School District No. 193.

Used for about 40 years as a school, for the past 40 years the one-room Featherville School has been operating as the Church of the Wildwood. The continuity of use and maintenance of the Featherville School by generations of local residents throughout the twentieth century, and up to the present, demonstrates the significance of this historical building to the unincorporated mountain community of Featherville.

The Featherville School maintains excellent integrity through retention of its original location, setting, configuration, massing, and cladding, which collectively illustrate its historical and architectural character. Alterations have been very minor both on the interior and exterior of the building, and it therefore readily meets the registration requirements of the *Public School Buildings in Idaho Multiple Property Documentation Form*.¹¹² As an exemplar of the one-room school house architectural style of Idaho's Early Statehood Period (1890 to 1930), the Featherville School is also the most iconic historical building in Featherville and remains one of the best-preserved, one-room school houses in Elmore County.

¹¹² Elizabeth Egleston, "Public School Buildings in Idaho," National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form (Boise, ID: State Historic Preservation Office, 1991).

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Featherville School
Name of Property

Elmore County, Idaho
County and State

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Featherville School
Name of Property

Elmore County, Idaho
County and State

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Featherville School
Name of Property

Elmore County, Idaho
County and State

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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 # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

☐ State Historic Preservation Office
☐ Other State agency
☐ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than 1 acre
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

Elmore County, Idaho
County and State

4 Zone Easting Northing

Featherville School
Name of Property

Elmore County, Idaho
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- Figure 2 Rocky Mountain setting of the Featherville School.
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- Figure 4 Interior view of the Featherville School.
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- Figure 6 1895 map of Elmore County, Idaho.
- Figure 7 1906 General Land Office plat for Township 3 North, Range 10 East.
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- Figure 10 Side view of the South Park Dredging Company's dredge at Featherville, ca. 1927.
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- Figure 19 Mae Sanders, founder and minister of the Church of the Wildwood, 1991.
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- Table 2 Featherville School and Casey's School Teachers.

Featherville School
Name of Property

Elmore County, Idaho
County and State

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 pixels, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log 24 photographs

Name of Property: Featherville School

City or Vicinity: Featherville

County: Elmore **State:** Idaho

Photographer: Sarah F. McDaniel

Date Photographed: August 9, 2014 (Verified by SHPO that photos reflect 2019 condition.)

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

All digital images are labeled as: ID_Elmore County_Featherville School_000#.tif

Photo #1	Overview; view SE
Photo #2	Primary (north) façade with main entry; view S
Photo #3	West elevation with banked windows; view E
Photo #4	Rear (south) and east elevations, view NW
Photo #5	East elevation; view W
Photo #6	Detail view of bell cupola; view SE
Photo #7	Detail view of cloakroom window on west elevation; view E
Photo #8	Detail view of banked windows and exposed rafters on west elevation; view E
Photo #9	Detail view of brick chimney at south elevation; view NE
Photo #10	Detail view of wooden foundation vent on east elevation; view W
Photo #11	Detail view of rear (south) exterior door; view N
Photo #12	Detail view of main entrance (north) exterior doors closed; view S
Photo #13	Detail view of main entrance (north) exterior doors opened; view S
Photo #14	Cloakroom, view from east end with main entrance doors and original coat hooks on right; view W
Photo #15	Cloakroom, east side interior entry door into classroom at left; view W
Photo #16	Cloakroom, view from west end with main entrance doors at left; view E
Photo #17	Cloakroom, west side interior entry door into classroom at left and storage space for original school desks, with bell pull at right; view W

Featherville School

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Photo #18	Classroom, overview of south wall with door and east wall with chalkboards; view S
Photo #19	Classroom, west wall with banked windows (vinyl adhesives give appearance of stained glass); view W
Photo #20	Classroom, east wall with original chalkboards at different heights; view E
Photo #21	Classroom, north interior wall with separate entrances and built-in cupboards; view N
Photo #22	Classroom, detail view of open cupboard with elementary school textbooks; view N
Photo #23	Classroom, staged detail view of original desk and 1914 text book, view S
Photo #24	Non-contributing modern pit toilet behind the school; view SW

Property Owner:

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

name Mountain Home School District 193

street & number 470 North 3rd East (PO Box 1390)

telephone 208-587-2580

city or town Mountain Home

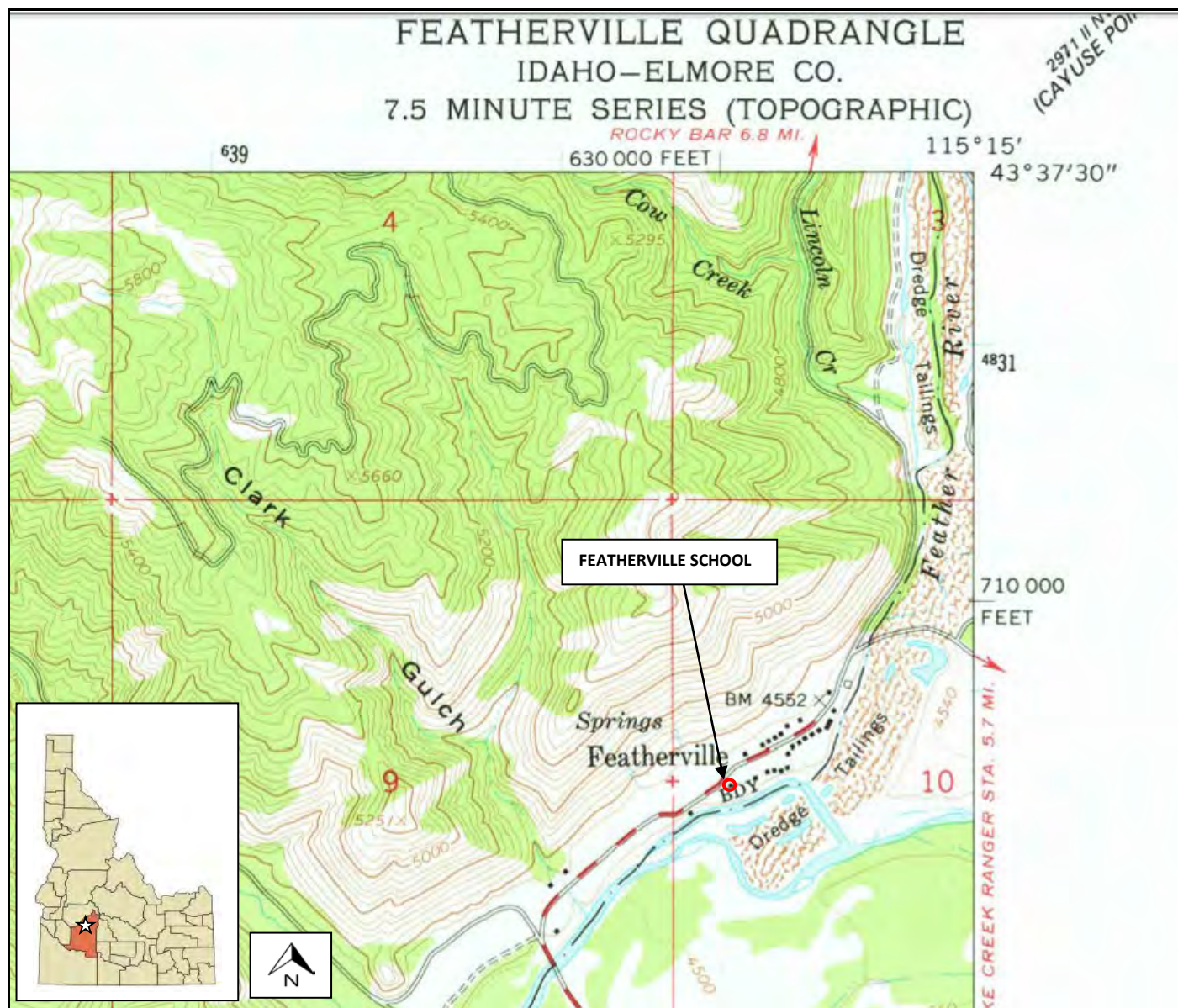
state ID 83647

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.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, D.C.

Featherville School
Name of Property

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USGS Featherville Quadrangle (1:24,000), dated 1964.

Featherville School (circled), Section 10, Township 3 North, Range 10 East

UTM coordinates:
640458 m Easting
4829920 m Northing
Zone 11, NAD 83

Featherville School
Name of Property

Elmore County, Idaho
County and State

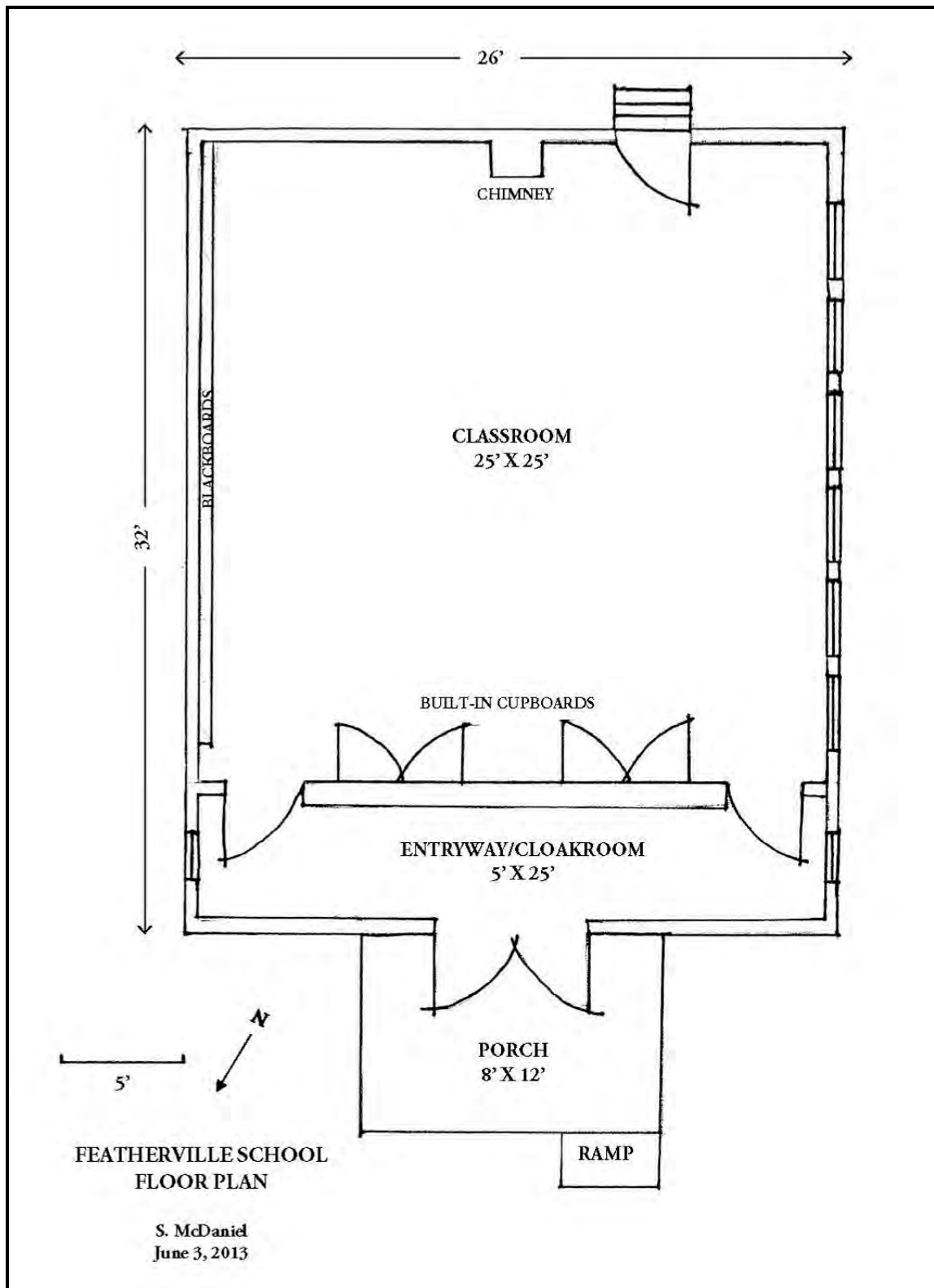


Featherville School Parcel Boundaries

Parcel Number: RP03N10E103610A
Elmore County, Idaho, Tax Assessor's Parcel Information System
<http://gis.idaho.gov/tax/Countysupport/Elmore.html>, accessed July 2016.

Featherville School
Name of Property

Elmore County, Idaho
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Featherville School Floor Plan Sketch Map

Featherville School
Name of Property

Elmore County, Idaho
County and State

Oh, come to the church in the Wildwood

By CARL HAMILTON

FEATHERVILLE, ID -- Featherville is located approximately 60 miles north of Mountain Home, and in contrast to its laid back lifestyle of today, it once was a bubbling and busy mining, timber and livestock center.

In 1909, a dredge, store and hotel were built to accommodate the growing population. School was held in a back room of the hotel until a snowslide demolished it. A new school was built in the 1920's and area children attended the one-room schoolhouse until the 1950's when the enrollment dropped below five students and the school was closed.

The schoolhouse stood empty until another lifestyle evolved wherein town and city residents purchased cabin sites, and mountain cabins checkered the pristine mountains where miner's tents and shacks once stood.

Bill and Mae Sanders of Mountain Home bought a lot and built a cabin in Featherville where they spend most of their weekends. But one disadvantage of living in Featherville bothered them; there were no church services available. So they set about leasing the vacant schoolhouse from the school district and enlisted the help of other residents, cabin owners and visitors, to bring Sunday Services to this mountain paradise.

This group of volunteers built a HIS and HERS in the back; they scrubbed; they plugged up most of the rat holes; they lowered the ceiling, painted the floors, bought and installed a new gas stove and hired a cabinet maker to build pews in lieu of the elementary school desks that were used for seating during their first services.

Since the Sanders' and none of the volunteers were ministers, they arranged for three Mountain Home churches to conduct the services by rotating ministers to Featherville. But due to conflicting schedules and other commitments, it didn't work out.

Out of necessity, Bill and Mae decided it would be better to make it a lay church open to all denominations wherein lay people could conduct the services. So they prepared the messages and Bill presented two Sunday Services before he concluded that he could better serve as a greeter and a janitor and Mae should do the preaching.

"I had never been a speaker and the first time I gave the message, I was really spitting cotton and I was so glad that I could hide my knockin' knees behind the podium," Mae recalls. "Another time, when I was apprehensive about delivering the message, a learned lady told me, 'just relax and let the Lord direct you and you'll do just fine,' so I did and it turned out all right."

So for the past 17 years, Mae

Sanders has been the main speaker for the Church of the Wildwood and local residents, Lee Brandon and Bill Day fill in for her. They have had as many as 115 people crowded into and outside of the 60 capacity church, and the Sanders modestly credit Featherville residents, the snowmobilers, the fishermen, the hunters and the vacationers, who find Godliness in the "little ole" one-room schoolhouse." They especially thank their Sunday School teachers, Marlene McCoy and Betty Shepherd from Nampa for finding beauty and art in a piece of drift wood with moss surrounding a typed passage from the Bible and a manger scene made of toothpicks and moss with Baby Jesus inside. They also thank their pianist, Nita Baker, for leading the hymns with so much gusto and adding so much to the services.

"No one accepts money for their services," Mae says. "This church survives through love."



Undated Newspaper Article, Church of the Wildwood

Clipped article on display in the Featherville School. Believed to date to ca. 1990, it was probably published in a local newspaper like *The Mountain Home News*.

Featherville School

Name of Property

Elmore County, Idaho

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Photo 1

Featherville School, Elmore County, Idaho
Exterior view facing southeast

Featherville School
Name of Property

Elmore County, Idaho
County and State



Photo 2

Featherville School, Elmore County, Idaho
Primary (north) elevation, looking south

Featherville School
Name of Property

Elmore County, Idaho
County and State



Photo 3

Featherville School, Elmore County, Idaho
Exterior west elevation, looking east

Featherville School
Name of Property

Elmore County, Idaho
County and State



Photo 4

Featherville School, Elmore County, Idaho
Exterior rear (south) and east elevations, looking north and west

Featherville School
Name of Property

Elmore County, Idaho
County and State



Photo 5

Featherville School, Elmore County, Idaho
Exterior east elevation, looking west

Featherville School

Name of Property

Elmore County, Idaho

County and State



Photo 6

Featherville School, Elmore County, Idaho
Exterior detail of bell cupola, looking southeast

Featherville School
Name of Property

Elmore County, Idaho
County and State



Photo 7

Featherville School, Elmore County, Idaho
Exterior detail of cloakroom window, west elevation, looking east

Featherville School
Name of Property

Elmore County, Idaho
County and State



Photo 8

Featherville School, Elmore County, Idaho
Exterior window detail, west elevation, facing east

Featherville School
Name of Property

Elmore County, Idaho
County and State



Photo 9

Featherville School, Elmore County, Idaho
Exterior chimney detail, facing northeast

Featherville School
Name of Property

Elmore County, Idaho
County and State



Photo 10

Featherville School, Elmore County, Idaho
Exterior foundation detail, east elevation, facing west

Featherville School

Name of Property

Elmore County, Idaho

County and State



Photo 11

Featherville School, Elmore County, Idaho
Exterior rear (south) door detail, facing north



Photo 12

Featherville School, Elmore County, Idaho
Exterior detail of primary (north) entry, facing south

Featherville School
Name of Property

Elmore County, Idaho
County and State



Photo 13

Featherville School, Elmore County, Idaho
Exterior detail of primary (north) entry, opened, facing south

Featherville School
Name of Property

Elmore County, Idaho
County and State



Photo 14

Featherville School, Elmore County, Idaho
Interior cloakroom, facing west

Featherville School

Name of Property

Elmore County, Idaho

County and State



Photo 15

Featherville School, Elmore County, Idaho
Interior cloakroom, facing south and west

Featherville School
Name of Property

Elmore County, Idaho
County and State



Photo 16

Featherville School, Elmore County, Idaho
Interior cloakroom, facing east

Featherville School
Name of Property

Elmore County, Idaho
County and State



Photo 17

Featherville School, Elmore County, Idaho
Interior cloakroom, west side classroom door, facing west

Featherville School
Name of Property

Elmore County, Idaho
County and State



Photo 18

Featherville School, Elmore County, Idaho
Interior classroom, facing south

Featherville School
Name of Property

Elmore County, Idaho
County and State



Photo 19

Featherville School, Elmore County, Idaho
Interior classroom, facing west

Featherville School
Name of Property

Elmore County, Idaho
County and State



Photo 20

Featherville School, Elmore County, Idaho
Interior classroom, facing east

Featherville School
Name of Property

Elmore County, Idaho
County and State

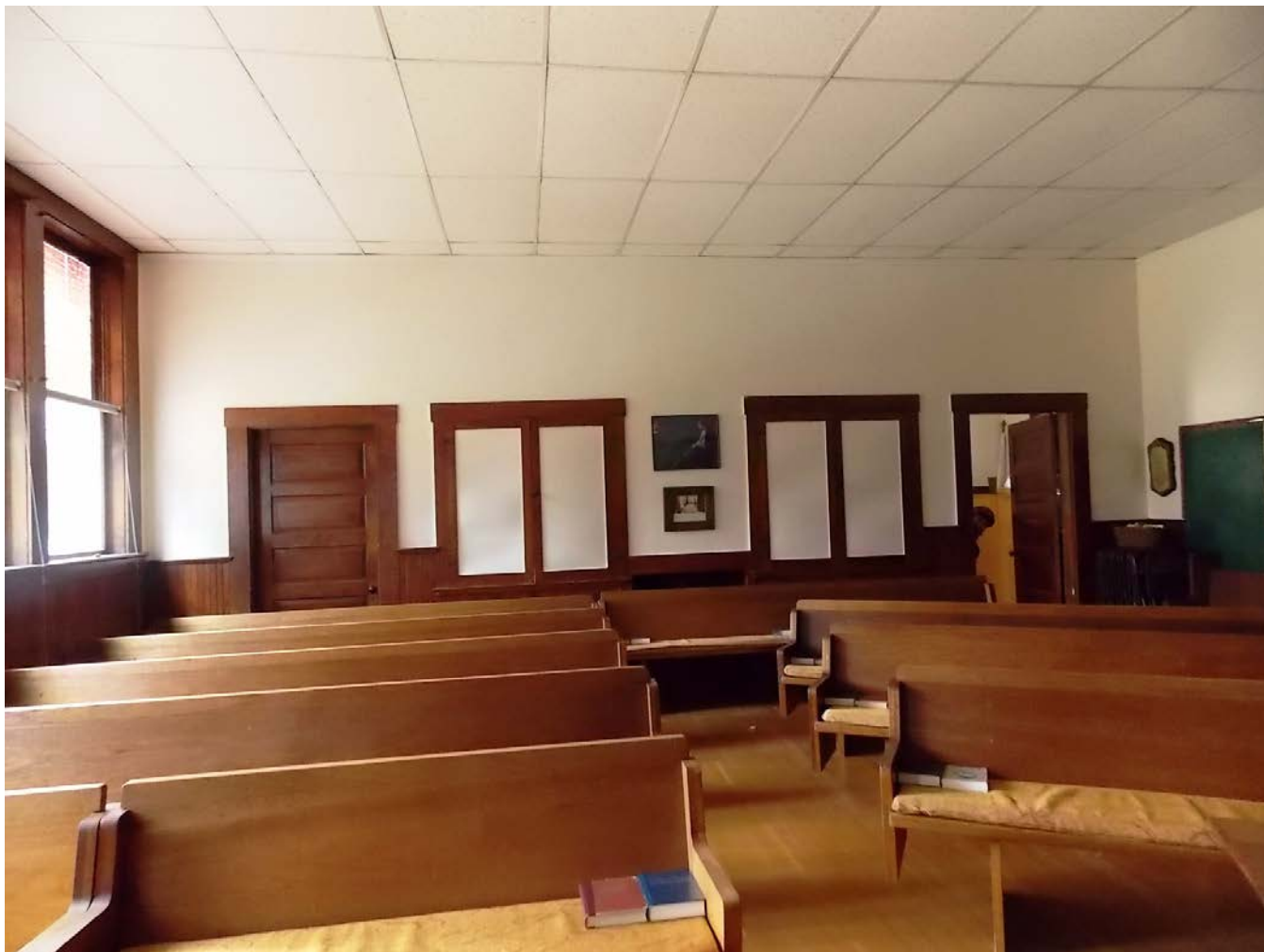


Photo 21

Featherville School, Elmore County, Idaho
Interior classroom, facing north

Featherville School
Name of Property

Elmore County, Idaho
County and State



Photo 22

Featherville School, Elmore County, Idaho
Interior classroom cupboard detail, facing north

Featherville School
Name of Property

Elmore County, Idaho
County and State



Photo 23

Featherville School, Elmore County, Idaho
Interior classroom desk detail, facing south

Featherville School

Name of Property

Elmore County, Idaho

County and State



Photo 24

Featherville School, Elmore County, Idaho
Exterior contemporary pit toilet (noncontributing), facing southwest



CHURCH - WILSON
KID-DEVELOPMENTAL
DINO BRIDGES



CHURCH OF THE WILDWOOD
NON-DENOMINATIONAL

CHURCH SERVICES..10:00
Everyone Welcomed

4
3
4
8

























BELIEVE
ON THE LORD
JESUS CHRIST
AND THOU
SHALT BE SAVED



BELIEVE
ON THE LORD
JESUS CHRIST
AND THOU
SHALT BE SAVED





**BELIEVE
ON THE LORD
JESUS CHRIST
AND THOU
SHALT BE SAVED**
ACTS 16:31









FOR GOD SO LOVED
THE WORLD THAT
HE GAVE HIS ONLY SON
THAT WHOEVER BELIEVES
IN HIM SHALL NOT PERISH
BUT HAVE ETERNAL LIFE
JOHN 3:16









UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination
Property Name: Featherville School
Multiple Name: Public School Buildings in Idaho MPS
State & County: IDAHO, Elmore

Date Received: 10/17/2019 Date of Pending List: 11/12/2019 Date of 16th Day: 11/27/2019 Date of 45th Day: 12/2/2019 Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: MP100004709

Nominator: SHPO

Reason For Review:

<input type="checkbox"/> Appeal	<input type="checkbox"/> PDIL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue
<input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Photo
<input type="checkbox"/> Waiver	<input type="checkbox"/> National	<input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary
<input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission	<input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource	<input type="checkbox"/> Period
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> TCP	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years
	<input type="checkbox"/> CLG	

☒ Accept ☐ Return ☐ Reject 12/2/2019 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments: The Featherville School is locally significant and meets National Register Criteria A and C in the areas of Education and Architecture. Built circa 1912, the one-story, wood-frame building is an excellent local example of early twentieth century, one-room schoolhouse design. Built in the midst of the community's resurgent mining boom, the building reflects the important role placed by residents on public education in isolated rural communities. The property meets the Registration Requirements of the Public School Buildings in Idaho MPS.

Recommendation/ Criteria: Accept NR Criteria A and C

Reviewer: Paul Lusignan Discipline: Historian
Telephone: (202)354-2229 Date: 12/2/2019

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



IDAHO STATE
**HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**



16 October 2019



Brad Little
Governor of Idaho

Janet Gallimore
Executive Director
State Historic
Preservation Officer

Administration:
2205 Old Penitentiary Rd.
Boise, Idaho 83712
208.334.2682
Fax: 208.334.2774

Idaho State Museum:
610 Julia Davis Dr.
Boise, Idaho 83702
208.334.2120

**Idaho State Archives
and State Records
Center:**
2205 Old Penitentiary Rd.
Boise, Idaho 83712
208.334.2620

**State Historic
Preservation Office:**
210 Main St.
Boise, Idaho 83702
208.334.3861

**Old Idaho Penitentiary
and Historic Sites:**
2445 Old Penitentiary Rd.
Boise, Idaho 83712
208.334.2844

HISTORY.IDAHO.GOV

Joy Beasley
Keeper of the National Register
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C Street NW, Mail Stop 7228
Washington, DC 20240

**Re: National Register of Historic Places Nomination
Featherville School, Elmore County, Idaho**

Dear Ms. Beasley:

Please find enclosed materials supporting the nomination of the **Featherville School**, located in Elmore County, Idaho, in the National Register of Historic Places. The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination. The submittal includes:

- *Original signed signature page of the NRHP form
- *CD containing true and correct PDF copy of the nomination – Disk 1
- *CD containing photos in TIFF format (24) – Disk 2

Thank you for your consideration of the enclosed nomination. If you have any questions, please contact me via phone or email at 208.488.7468 or matt.halitsky@ishs.idaho.gov.

Sincerely,

**Matthew Halitsky, AICP
National Register Coordinator
Idaho State Historic Preservation Office**