

AUG - 5 2016

631

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Nat. Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service

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.

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Beaver Creek School

Other names/site number: Rock Schoolhouse

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

## 2. Location

Street & number: 4810 E. Beaver Creek Road

City or town: Rimrock State: AZ County: Yavapai

Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,


I hereby certify that this X nomination     request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets     does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

    national     statewide   X   local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

  X   A     B     C     D

 <b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b> <u>AZ STATE PARKS/SHPO</u> <b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b>	<p style="text-align: right; font-size: 1.5em;">7/28/16</p> <b>Date</b>
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<p>In my opinion, the property <u>   </u> meets <u>   </u> does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<b>Signature of commenting official:</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Title :</b>	<b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b>


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**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

9/20/16  
Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>          </u>	buildings
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	sites
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	structures
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>          </u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION/School

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

RECREATION AND CULTURE/Museum

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

No style

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: Stone

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property.)

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### Summary Paragraph

Beaver Creek School is located in the unincorporated rural community of Rimrock in the Verde Valley, northeast of the Town of Camp Verde. Local residents, without guidance from a professional architect, built the school of local limestone rock in 1932. The building has a vernacular rectangular, one-story design with a medium-pitch front gable roof. The interior has two classrooms, originally separated by a folding partition, but now by a wall. Original interior features such as maple wood floors and two storage closets remain. For many years the only elementary school building in the area, the Beaver Creek School District campus has grown in recent years with additional classroom buildings and educational facilities. The old rock schoolhouse is now the centerpiece of the campus and symbol of continuity in the education of local children for multiple generations.

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### Narrative Description

Beaver Creek School District Number 26 is a one-school elementary district located in the unincorporated community of Rimrock. The district also draws students from the nearby communities of Lake Montezuma and McGuireville (Ward, email, Jan 15, 2016). These rural communities are located northeast of the Town of Camp Verde in central Arizona's Verde River Valley. The area has also been known historically as Beaver Creek after two streams, Wet and Dry Beaver Creeks, which converge to form a tributary to the Verde River to the south. Interstate 17, which links the Phoenix metropolitan area to Flagstaff in the north, provides the area's primary transportation connection to the rest of Arizona. Prior to the construction of Interstate 17 and its predecessor route, the Black Canyon Highway, Beaver Creek was a node of unpaved rural roads linking ranches and farms in the area.

The Beaver Creek School District campus is composed largely of modern classroom and other educational facilities built since the 1960s. The centerpiece of the campus, however, is a historic school building constructed in 1932, which served as classroom space for more than eight decades. Though small, this building is visually distinguished by its walls of unquarried limestone rocks for which it is commonly referred to as the Rock Schoolhouse. According to the current Beaver Creek School Superintendent, this building remained in use as a classroom until 2012 (Ward, email Jan. 15, 2016).

The Rock Schoolhouse is one-story and rectangular with outside dimensions of 54' by 24'-4". The front and rear entrances are centered on the shorter walls (see Figure 1). The building sits

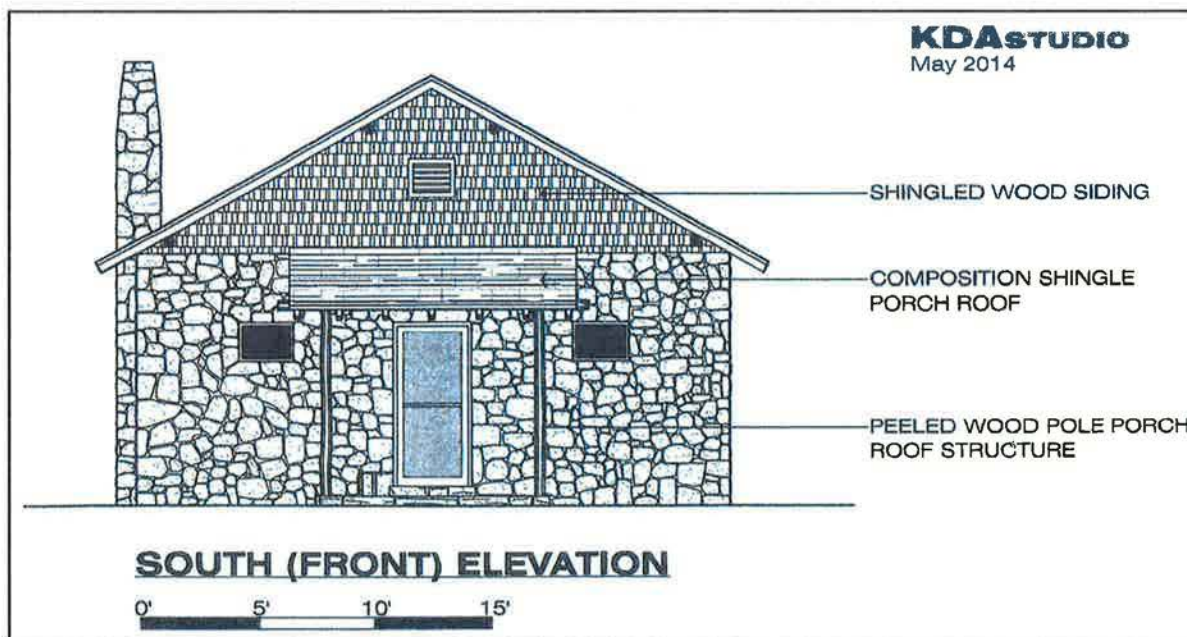


Figure 1. Front elevation of Rock Schoolhouse at Beaver Creek School. From *Documentation of Existing Building: Rock Schoolhouse, Beaver Creek Elementary School*, KDAstudio, 2014.

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at an angle to true north so that its front entrance faces south-southwest. There is a small covered porch at the front entrance with "1932" carved into one of the flagstones. The wood front door is not original, having replaced a too-heavy steel and glass door, which itself replaced the original wood door in the early 1980s. Two small window openings pierce the wall on either side of the door. These windows are wood-frame single pane hopper windows. The pine posts for the front porch and the front porch itself are original. The porch stone floor measures approximately 10' by 4' and the posts are about 7'-10" tall. A wood sign reading "BEAVER CREEK SCHOOL" hangs from the porch beam.

The rear (north-northeast) side closely resembles the front entrance (see Figure 2). The rear, however, lacks a porch cover and its gable is of composite siding, compared to wood shingle siding on the front. Like the front, the rear has two small window openings on either side of the door. These windows are wood-frame single pane hopper windows. The current rear door replaced the original in the 1960s. The back porch measures 10' by 4'-5".

Not included in the KDAstudio illustrations, but seen in the accompanying photographs are two evaporative coolers on the west slope of the gable roof, one for each room.

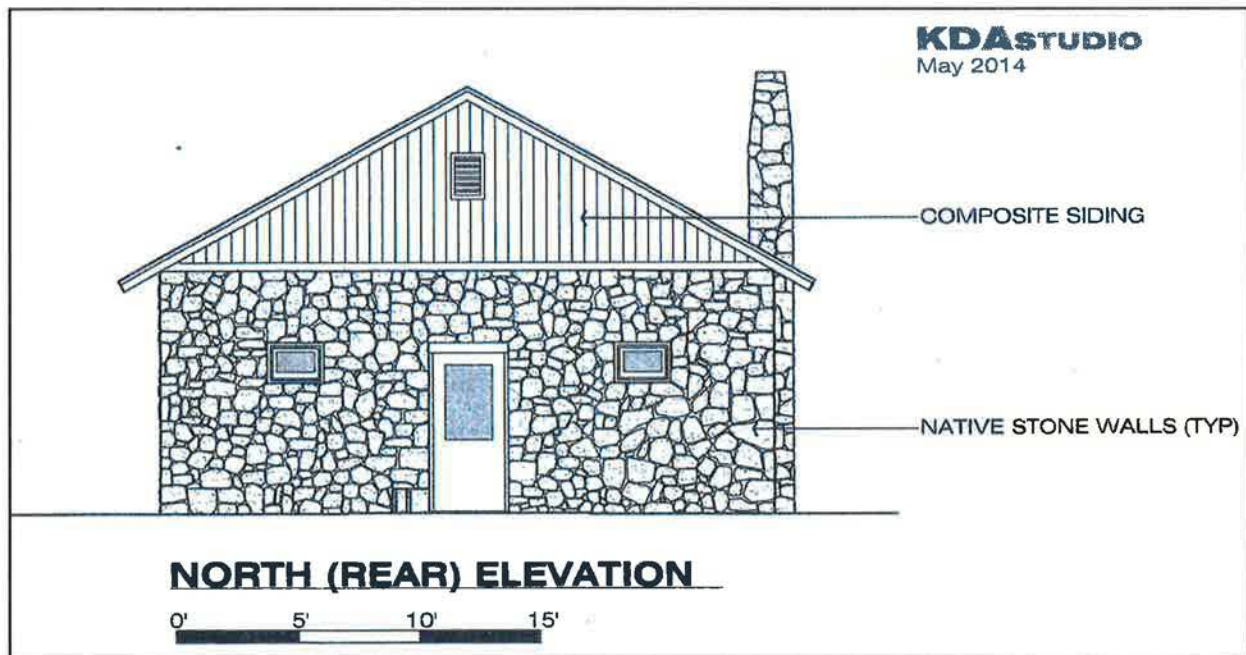


Figure 2. Front elevation of Rock Schoolhouse at Beaver Creek School. From *Documentation of Existing Building: Rock Schoolhouse, Beaver Creek Elementary School*, KDAstudio, 2014.

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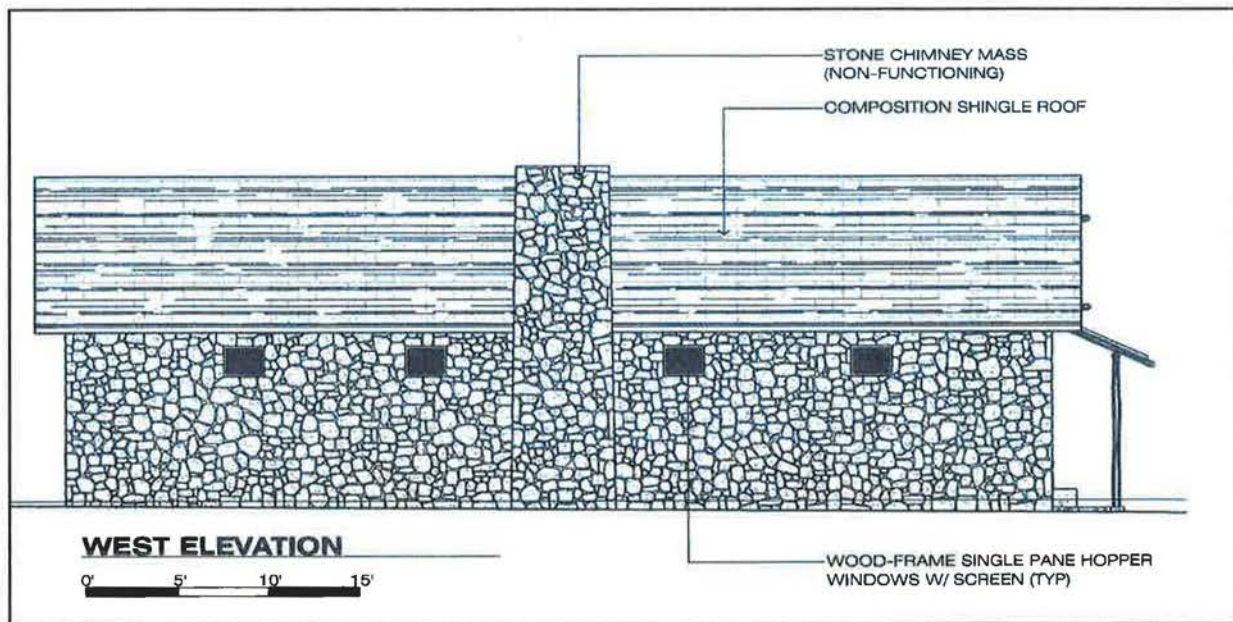


Figure 3. West-northwest elevation of Rock Schoolhouse at Beaver Creek School. From *Documentation of Existing Building: Rock Schoolhouse, Beaver Creek Elementary School*, KDAstudio, 2014.

The building's west-northwest side has a centered stone chimney projecting from the plane of the wall (see Figure 3). It is 18'-6" tall. This chimney originally served wood-burning stoves inside, but is currently nonfunctional. Four small window openings pierce this wall, two each on either side of the chimney. These windows are wood-frame single pane hopper windows.

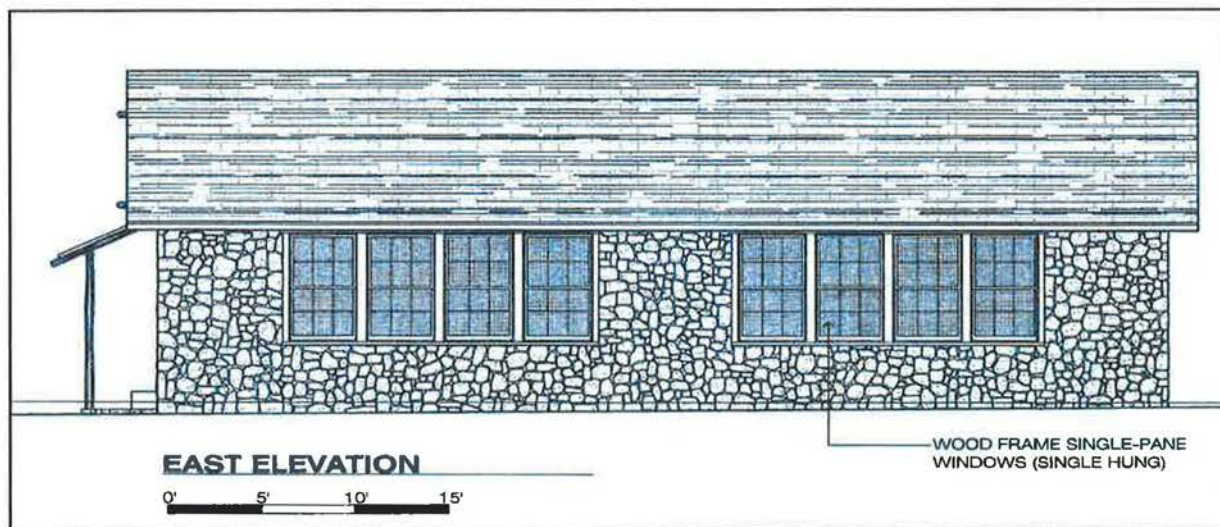


Figure 4. East-southeast elevation of Rock Schoolhouse at Beaver Creek School. From *Documentation of Existing Building: Rock Schoolhouse, Beaver Creek Elementary School*, KDAstudio, 2014.

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The east-southeast elevation features two sets of four 6-over-6 single-hung windows (see Figure 4). These windows provide natural light from the morning sun into the two classrooms in the building.

The interior has two classrooms, originally separated by a folding partition, but now by a wall (see Figure 5). Original interior features such as maple wood floors and two storage closets

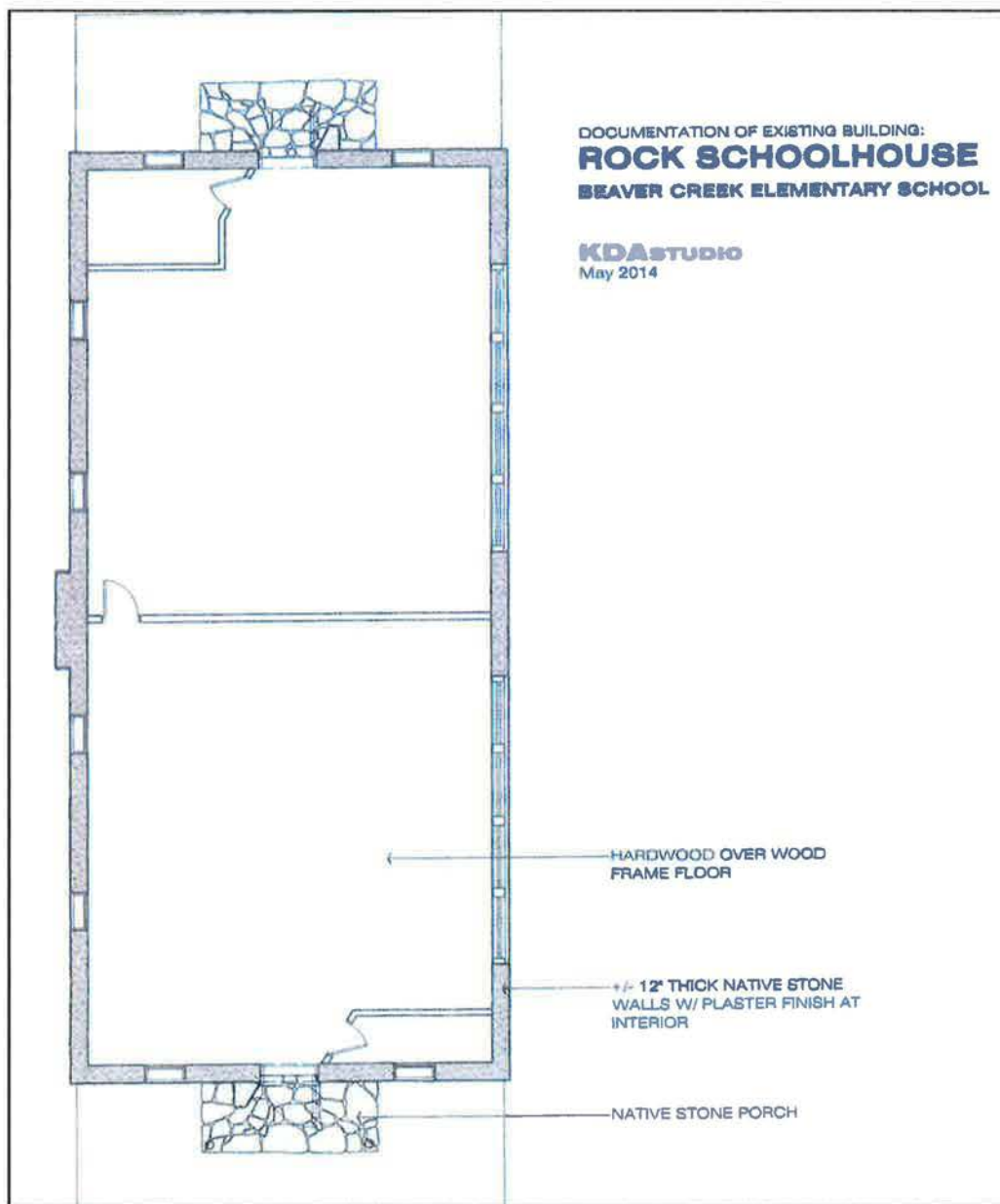


Figure 5. Floor plan of Rock Schoolhouse at Beaver Creek School. From *Documentation of Existing Building: Rock Schoolhouse, Beaver Creek Elementary School*, KDAstudio, 2014.



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remain. The wood floors are in a remarkable state of preservation for their age and show little sign of requiring repair. The interior side of the stone walls are plastered. Florescent lighting has been installed and the old wood-burning stove has been removed. The original slate blackboards no longer remain.

The Rock Schoolhouse at Beaver Creek School retains a high degree of integrity and conveys its identity as a simply built, vernacular rural school building. The building remains in its original location and has had no additions. The roofing material was replaced in 1988. The only alteration to the front was the replacement of the door, first by a steel and glass door, then by another wood door in 2015. The back door was also replaced in the 1960s. The most notable alteration to the interior was the replacement of the original folding partition between the two classrooms with a permanent wall structure. The general setting in which the Rock Schoolhouse stands retains its rural character. The most important change in setting has been the development of modern classrooms and other educational facilities on the campus. While the Rock Schoolhouse is no longer an isolated building overlooking the Verde Valley, its surroundings are compatible with its historic function. The Rock Schoolhouse is the focal point of the campus and symbol of the school's continuity of use by several generations of local children.

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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.)

- 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

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**Areas of Significance**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**  
1932 - 1966  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**  
1932  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**  
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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### **Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph**

The Beaver Creek School is a two-room schoolhouse located in the Beaver Creek (aka Lake Montezuma and Rimrock) community of central Arizona's Verde Valley. Local residents constructed the building in 1932. They used locally available stone to create a fire-resistant building to replace earlier wooden schoolhouses used by the Beaver Creek School District, which burned down on more than one occasion. The building remains a part of the Beaver Creek School campus, which since the 1960s has expanded with new buildings to accommodate an increasing student population. The Beaver Creek School is recommended eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for the Education area of significance at the Local level of significance. The period of significance starts from the date of construction in 1932. It continues to the National Register's fifty-year guideline date of 1966, representing the building's continued use as an educational facility.

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### **Narrative Statement of Significance**

#### **Community Building in the Verde Valley**

Beaver Creek School District is a small, one-school district providing education for children from preschool to eighth grade. Established in 1881, the district serves the unincorporated communities of Rimrock, McGuireville, and Lake Montezuma, which are located in Arizona's Verde River Valley, just to the northeast of the Town of Camp Verde. The Beaver Creek School campus has grown from a two-room stone building constructed in 1932 into a campus of several modern classroom buildings and education facilities, serving 318 students (Ward, email, Jan. 15, 2016). Although no longer used as a classroom (such use ceased only in 2012), the 1932 building, commonly referred to as the Rock Schoolhouse, is the sentimental heart of the campus and symbolizes the continuity of generations of community children who have and continue to attend the school.

The Verde River is a perennial stream flowing through a valley in central Arizona in a generally southeasterly direction towards a juncture with the Salt River. In addition to serving the larger local communities of Cottonwood, Camp Verde, and Clarkdale, the Verde River is one of the major sources of water for the Phoenix metropolitan area. The climate in the Verde Valley is relatively mild for Arizona, generally avoiding extremes of summer heat associated with the southern desert or winter cold in the higher elevations above the Mogollon Rim.

The Verde Valley has been home for human communities for centuries. National Monuments such as Tuzigoot, Montezuma Castle, and Montezuma Well preserve the legacy of ancient cultures that once thrived along the Verde and its tributaries, such as the two streams known as Dry Beaver Creek and Wet Beaver Creek. European exploration of the region occurred sporadically beginning with Spanish explorers who, despite finding evidence of mineral wealth,

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could not settle or develop the area due to its remoteness and the opposition of Native Americans (Byrkit 31-32, 34).

The first United States citizens to explore the Verde Valley were trappers attracted by once abundant beaver populations. The first white settlers with farming in mind to enter the region arrived early in 1865, taking up land at the confluence of Clear Creek and the Verde River. Clear Creek, it may be noted, was the effective southern end of the upper Verde River, where the river leaves the relatively open land of the Middle Verde Valley and enters a narrower chasm where, in the twentieth century, two major dams and reservoirs would be constructed. After American acquisition of the region consequent to the Mexican War, the United States Army established posts to facilitate settlement and the exploitation of what was increasingly recognized as a land of great mineral wealth. The army's first post in the area was Camp Lincoln, established in 1866 near the confluence of Beaver Creek with the Verde River. This post was relocated shortly after and renamed Fort Verde. The post provided protection to early American settlers as well as economic support as a supply base, travel stop and staging area for the army. After closure of the fort in 1891 the community of Camp Verde grew up around the old post buildings. Serious mining development of the Verde Valley began when Montana's copper king, William Andrews Clark (namesake of the smelter town of Clarkdale), solved the problem of accessibility by constructing the Verde Valley's first railroad. The narrow-gauge rail service begun in 1895 spurred the development of Jerome into one of the nation's largest copper mining operations. (Byrkit 37, 42, 44)

Agricultural development of the Verde Valley proceeded slowly and depended on construction of irrigation works to deliver water to fields and orchards. Among the first irrigation system developers were the four Willard brothers, cattlemen who came to the Verde Valley in 1878, but in the 1880s moved into agriculture. The Willards organized the group that built the Cottonwood Ditch, one of the largest irrigation systems in the Middle Verde region. Agriculture was more successful in the area around Camp Verde than closer to the mining community of Jerome and smelter town of Clarkdale, in part because the Verde Valley was, unfortunately, a trap for air pollution from copper smelters. Closure of the smelter in 1953 improved health conditions, but struck deeply at the area's economy. Economic development began to take off again after the Black Canyon Highway, later Interstate 17, opened a new route between Phoenix and Flagstaff, passing near the communities of Camp Verde and the Beaver Creek area. (Byrkit 41)

The first known American settler along Beaver Creek, Wales Arnold, arrived in 1870. A former soldier and sutler for Camp Lincoln, Arnold raised the first alfalfa in the Verde Valley. By 1879 there were enough children in the area that Ed Mulholland began teaching at a rancher's home which would lead to the establishment of Beaver Creek School. Later settlers in the area included Eugene McGuire, who homesteaded land at the confluence of Dry and Wet Beaver Creeks. In the 1930s Midge Hall Pigman bought the land and ran a small store and gas station. Today their legacy is preserved in the name of the unincorporated community of McGuireville. Rimrock began as a dude ranch called Rimrock Ranch, which in 1928 served as a local post office. The area was also served by an airplane landing strip called Rimrock Airport. In about 1957, after the opening of the Black Canyon Highway from Phoenix, the golf community of Lake Montezuma was developed as a subdivision out of former ranch land. Lake Montezuma soon became home

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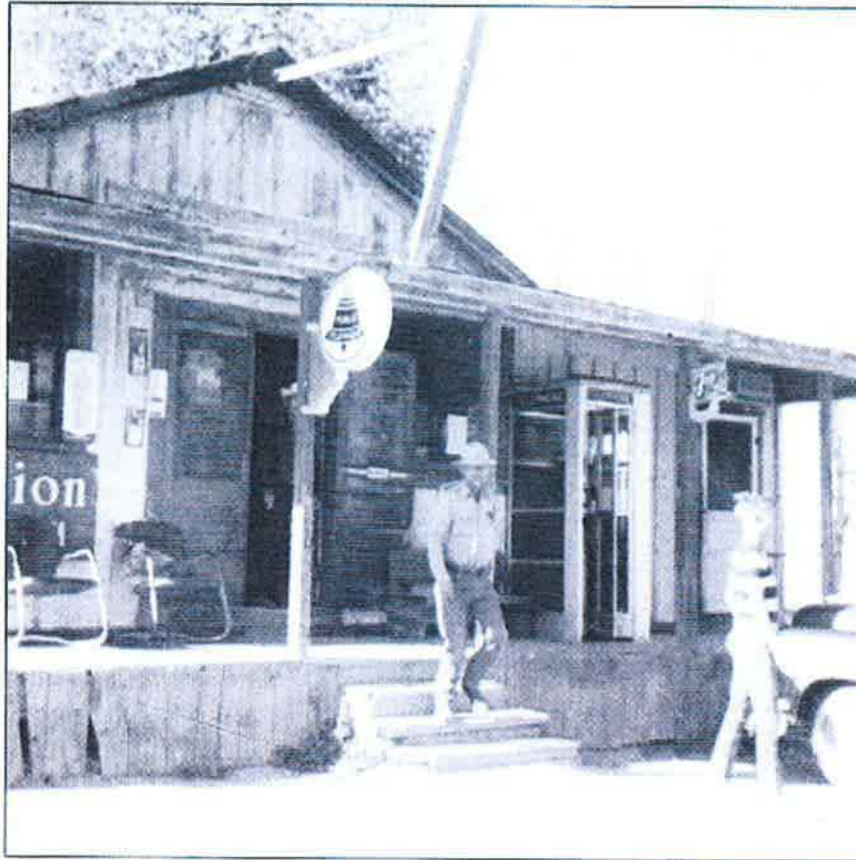


Figure 6. Midge Hall Pigman's store in McGuireville, ca. 1955. (Cowan 62)

to the majority of residents in the region. The Lake Montezuma census-designated area (CDA), which includes Rimrock, had a population of 4,775 people in 2010 (Yavapai County Board of Supervisors). The 1,471 households and 938 families residing in the Lake Montezuma CDA had about 655 children under the age of 18. Many of these children would pass through the Beaver Creek School during their elementary education years.

Early pioneers in central Arizona relied on primitive dirt tracks and stage routes to get to the Verde Valley and on to Prescott, the county seat. The Chavez Wagon Road crossed the Verde River and was part of the route of the 1876 Prescott to Santa Fe stage. "By 1892 a shortcut of the Chavez Wagon Road brought travelers down what became the Blue Grade past Montezuma's Well. The campground (at the Well) with its large cottonwood trees emerged as an inviting place to rest or camp. As traffic increased, the adobe buildings accommodated adventurous travelers. This route continued to be the thoroughfare into the highlands until construction of I-17 in the 1950s" (Cowan 59).

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By the 1930s traffic into the Beaver Creek area was sufficient to inspire Midge Hall Pigman to set up a mercantile store in McGuireville. She had arrived in the area via the narrow gauge railroad in 1917. Her generosity and industrious nature were well-known. Her store (founded in 1930) became the gateway to neighboring communities (see Figure 6). It was also the stop for the Beaver Creek School bus, where her two children attended. Electricity replaced kerosene lamps in 1940, the same year running water was installed. In 1942 “Midge bought the entire 160 acres for \$5,000. When the construction of I-17 was underway, Midge’s business boomed...Until a few years before her death in 1986, Midge kept a sharp eye on all phases of life in McGuireville” (Lightbourn and Lyons 74). This included interest in Beaver Creek school children because Midge served on the school board for several years. During the 1950s and 60s the workers at Midge’s trailer court sent their children to Beaver Creek School. As the freeway progressed, school enrollment increased. In 1970 two portable buildings were added to Beaver Creek School. The Rock School still provided classrooms, but the era of expansion had finally dawned. The major north/south highway in Arizona today is Interstate 17 and Midge’s original home and the Rock School still stand as a reminder of generations of folks who helped bring our state into the modern age.

### Elementary education in the Beaver Creek area

By 1875, local ranchers such as the Wingfield family began to think about educating their children. The Wingfields set up the first classroom in their home, but by 1879 “there were sufficient families in Middle Verde and along Beaver Creek to warrant schools (Cowan 51).” These early structures were modest one- or two-room wood buildings. According to Barbara Scharch, who wrote a brief history of Beaver Creek School in 1981, “the first official record of Beaver Creek School is buried in a small . . . book at the office of the Yavapai County Superintendent of Schools in Prescott. Just one line, ‘1881—District No. 19 –Wm. Fain, Clerk of Board’.” (Scharch, *The Journal*, October 7, 1981). The district's area was described as:

Commencing at Beaver Head due east 3 miles, thence 9 miles southeasterly to Casner Creek; west to and including Pratts Ranch, 9 miles north, thence in an easterly direction to Beaver Head, its beginning. (Scharch, *The Journal*, October 7, 1981)

This was a large tract, but the school itself was a log cabin on the Casner Ranch. The first teacher was “Uncle Ed Mulholland and was paid by the Wingfield family” (*Pioneer Stories of Arizona’s Verde Valley*, 153). In 1882 a new schoolhouse was built on Beaver Creek at the site of the Rimrock Post Office. “This one was of lumber, a shake roof and board floor” (Scharch, *The Journal*, October 7, 1981). These were modest schools, but would not have existed at all if the ranchers had not contributed land, labor, money and materials. This support continued as more ranching families settled the area.

William and Marjorie Back acquired land that included Montezuma’s Well in 1888 and “began guiding travelers through the ruins above Beaver Creek at the turn of the century. For 50 cents visitors were guided to the Indian Ruins at Montezuma’s Well” (Cowan 55). The Backs contributed to the school district by providing space for the school. A 1900 photo shows the school and its nineteen students at the Bill Back Ranch (see Figure 7). In its early years, the

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Figure 7. Old wood frame Beaver Creek School, on the Back Ranch, with students and teacher 1900. (Cowan 55)

Beaver Creek School operated close to Yavapai County's minimum of ten students in a registered school.

Beaver Creek School's most famous teacher was Eulalia "Sister" Bourne (c. 1895-1984), who would later write several books on early twentieth century education in rural Arizona [*Ranch Schoolteacher* (1974) and *Nine Months is Year: Teaching at Baboquivari School* (1968)]. In 1913, Bourne was a young woman in search of a teaching post. She happened to have a young sister in her care, which, conveniently, would increase the school's population of nine students to ten, the number required by the county. She accepted the job even though both girls had to sleep in a tiny (storage) space on the north side of the school building. They cooked outside using a camp stove and tent purchased on credit from the Wingfield store.

We had no means of transportation. We sent for what we needed by neighbors. And every weekend was spent at the Chestnuts or Griscoms where we did our washing and ironing (Bourne, *Ranch Schoolteacher*, 25).

In spite of the hardships, Bourne grew into a capable and understanding teacher. The big boys including 6-foot-2 Gene Hallet became her helpers and the youngest children were charmed by her lively, helpful nature. Her schoolhouse was dreary on the outside, but inside it was "pleasant"



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*Spring comes in the school room*

Figure 8. Interior of old wood frame Beaver Creek School circa 1914 with wood stove on rear wall. (Courtesy of Camp Verde Historical Society)

with a “tall heating stove in the center of the room near the rear” (see Figure 8) and blackboards, shelves, a teacher’s desk and an American flag. (Bourne 31)”. Plus Bourne wanted to teach and she sincerely liked youngsters. “Our school was fun,” she later wrote. “We climaxed it with a community party for Christmas” (Bourne 37)”. Bourne worked only briefly at Beaver Creek School. After the holidays she was transferred to the Walker Creek School several miles away.

Another noteworthy teacher was Ruth Woolf Jordan, who taught at Beaver Creek School for several terms in the 1920s. Jordan graduated from the State Normal School Tempe (now Arizona State University) in 1922 and fulfilled her “childhood dream of living in the country, having her own horse, and teaching in a one-teacher school (Jordan 72).” “I had at least six grades at a time,” (Jordan 73) and did the janitorial work such as building fires in the woodstove. She loved organizing plays and took an active part in recess games. Yet she was clever enough to thwart the big boys (who planned to play hooky) by leading a picnic and field trip to nearby Indian ruins on the same day. She recalls “riding three miles from Soda Springs Ranch (where she boarded)

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Figure 9. Teacher Ruth Wolf Jordan with her horse circa 1925. (Cowan 57)

to my one-room schoolhouse at Beaver Creek... I got a lot of wear out of my cowboy hat, leather skirt and spurs" (Jordan 73) (See Figure 9).

Jordan was teacher, mentor and counselor for all her students. Their lives were hard and she tried to ease their burdens by "bringing home each student at least once a year to eat and spend the night at the guest ranch (Soda Springs) where she lived (Jordan 73)". This was a huge treat for kids who were often underfed and overworked. She also had water hauled to the school weekly so she could heat it and offer shampoos and haircuts to those who did not have access to daily clean water. These extras cemented her reputation as a caring person who went far beyond the call of duty. Jordan's five-year tenure at Beaver Creek School was long remembered for her dedication and acts of kindness. (Ruth lived the rest of her life helping run the Jordan Ranch, now a museum operated by the Sedona Historical Society.)

Other early teachers included Irene Fredericks, granddaughter of the pioneer Fredericks whose home had served as a school site in 1914. She had three years preparation at Northern Arizona Teachers College (now Northern Arizona University) a distinction in 1929. She was followed by Lillian McNabb and Alice Archambeau in 1930-31. Both women stayed in "rented adobe tourist cabins that had recently been built at Montezuma's Well" (Lightbourn and Lyons 81).

The wooden schoolhouse preceding the present building suffered fire damage in 1924 and again in 1932. After the fire in February 1932 Bill Eaton (whose children attended Beaver Creek), owner of the Rimrock Guest Ranch, donated land with a well. Parents and school board members designed a sturdy rock structure (see Figure 10) with "folding doors that could divide the area into two classrooms or be opened for community events" (Lightbourn and Lyons 83). To

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Figure 10. Beaver Creek School in 1932. (Courtesy of Camp Verde Historical Society)

pay for this construction they decided to hold dances every other Saturday night. One dollar admitted men; ladies were free (see Figure 11). After paying musicians, the balance went on the building debt (Lightbourn and Lyons 83). Beaver Creek School alumnus Robert Beltz recalled going to these dances as a child because his dad was the caller and a fiddler. “We came all the way from Clarkdale. I remember lots of people came and enjoyed the gatherings” (Beltz, Oral interview, November 8, 2015).

After the Indian Agency School in Middle Verde burned in 1943, Native American children were welcomed into Beaver Creek’s school (Randall 2016). “Several native families lived in a small village below the Van Deren ranch and their children became students in the Beaver Creek District” (Lightbourn and Lyons 83). This helped keep the school open by keeping enrollment up. Yet sometimes only one teacher was needed during the war years. Fortunately improvements were added such as “oil burning heaters to replace the previous wood stoves and the addition of electricity in the schoolhouse” (Lightbourn and Lyons 83).

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Figure 11. Dancing in Beaver Creek School, circa 1935. (Cowan 65). Original partition allowed interior space to be opened.

### **Beaver Creek School and Local Archaeology**

The Beaver Creek School is located less than a linear mile from Montezuma Well National Monument and only a few miles from Montezuma Castle National Monument. Many teachers including Eulalia Bourne and Mary Lyons took students on field trips to explore these ruins of pre-Columbian Native American cultures. When the ancient pit house near the Well was being excavated in 1955, Lyons organized a school trip to observe the archaeologists at work (see Figure 12). Other teachers led outings to Montezuma's Well, which was in walking distance. Students learned about the importance of Native American heritage and a little about the science of preserving the past. The Dyck children got to see it on their own land.

Local Ranchers were accustomed to finding pot sherds and relics on their property; some were protective of the sites and did not allow public access. One rancher, Paul Dyck, took this a step further by organizing and funding a scientific dig at a rockshelter site on his ranch in 1962. For ten years the dig continued, unearthing thousands of items, some currently on display in Camp Verde. "So far the (Verde Valley Archaeology) Center has catalogued 11,000 of the 20,000

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Figure 12. Beaver Creek School students and teachers at the excavation of the pit house near Montezuma's Well circa 1955. (Lightbourn 84)

items, according to Todd Bostwick, the center's executive director of archaeology" (Carvalho, *The Bugle*, Nov. 27, 2015). The center is a certified repository for such items. According to Jeanne Smith who has been involved since the center's founding, "This collection is the nicest one in the Southwest because it is so vast and well-preserved" (Carvalho *The Bugle*, Nov. 27, 2015). The collection was donated by John Dyck, a graduate of the Beaver Creek (Rock) School and president of the Dyck Foundation. His father, Paul, was a talented professional artist and a descendent of Antoon VanDyk (1599-1641), the great Flemish painter. Paul and John Dyck's foresight has advanced the archaeology of the Verde Valley, and the Beaver Creek area in particular, immensely.

The proximity to ancient ruins added to the curriculum at Beaver Creek School. According to Judy McBride, former superintendent of the Beaver Creek School District, ancient cultures have been included in the curriculum. "For example, the Environmental Study Area Project in the late 1980s reflected a collaboration between Montezuma Castle and Montezuma Well park rangers and Beaver Creek School. It taught teachers and students not only information about ancient cultures but about the environment itself—native grasses, trees, riparian areas—and integrated language arts, math, and science" (McBride, oral interview, January 8, 2016).

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### Summary

The Beaver Creek School District has served the educational needs of local residents in the Rimrock-Lake Montezum-McGuireville area of the Verde Valley since 1881. After the loss of earlier wooden school buildings, local residents built a two-room school in 1932, which remains today in remarkably unaltered form. While in its early days, the district teetered at the edge of the county's minimum student count, it is today a multi-building campus providing education from preschool through eighth grade. The Rock Schoolhouse at Beaver Creek School was used as classrooms for over eight decades. It was briefly used as office space, but is now occupied by the Beaver Creek Preservation & Historical Society. For the school's alumni the Rock Schoolhouse is the focus of sentimental attachment to their past and a central institution in maintaining community spirit. The old rock schoolhouse is recommended eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A as the property most notably associated with the Education area of significance at the local level.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Beltz, Robert. Personal interview, (eyewitness account of dances at Beaver Creek School in 1930s). November 8, 2015.

Bourne, Eulalia. *Ranch Schoolteacher*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1974.

Byrkit, James W. "A Log of the Verde: The "Taming" of an Arizona River." *Journal of Arizona History*. (Vol. 19, No. 1, Spring 1978), 31-54.

Carvalho, Aryssa. "20,000 artifacts on rotating display at Verde Valley Archaeology Center" *The Bugle*, November 27, 2015.

Cowan, William. *Images of America—Verde Valley*. Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2011.

Darwin, Kenneth. KDA Studios. Architectural Drawings. June 2014.

Hendrickson, Raquel. "Preserving the Beaver Creek Rock School". *The Bugle*. Feb. 14, 2014.

Jordan, F. Ruth and Becky Tognoni Boudway. *Following Their Westward Star: An Oral History, Photos, and Paintings of Arizona's Verde Valley and Sedona's Red Rock Country*. Surprise, Arizona: Moore Graphics, 2005.

Lightbourn, Til and Mary Lyons. *By the Banks of Beaver Creek*. Nappanee, Indiana: Evangel Press, 1989.

McBride, Judith. Personal interview with former principal and superintendent of Beaver Creek School, January 8, 2016.

*Pioneer Stories of Arizona's Verde Valley*. Verde Valley Pioneers Association and Fort Verde Museum Association, 1954. Note: Section 1 originally printed in 1933.

Randall, Vincent (curator for the Yavapai Apache Tribe). Personal communication. 2016.

Scharch, Barbara. *Beaver Creek School. The Journal*, October 7, 1981.

Ward, Karen. Email, Jan. 15, 2016.

Yavapai County Board of Supervisors. U.S. Census information for 2010.

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Yavapai County Records. Beaver Creek School Board Records. Original documents 1932.

**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: Beaver Creek Preservation & Historical Society

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** N/A

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**9. Geographical Data**

**Acreege of Property** Less than 1

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_  
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 34.656421                      Longitude: 111.765321

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)



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The boundary of the Beaver Creek School (Rock Schoolhouse) is the footprint of the building.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

With the development of the Beaver Creek School District campus since the late 1960s, the old Rock Schoolhouse is now embedded among several modern classroom buildings. Only the building itself is significant and there is no surrounding land of historic importance.

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### 10. Form Prepared By

name/title: Audrey Erb (with editorial assistance of William Collins, AZ SHPO)  
organization: Beaver Creek Preservation & Historical Society  
street & number: 4810 Beaver Creek Rd.  
city or town: Rimrock state: AZ zip code: 86335  
e-mail: audrey\_erb@q.com  
telephone: (928) 567-5018  
date: July 28, 2016

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### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:**

### Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, 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

Name of Property: Beaver Creek School  
City or Vicinity: Rimrock  
County: Yavapai County State: AZ  
Photographer: Eric Vondy  
Date Photographed: October 30, 2015

Beaver Creek School  
Name of Property

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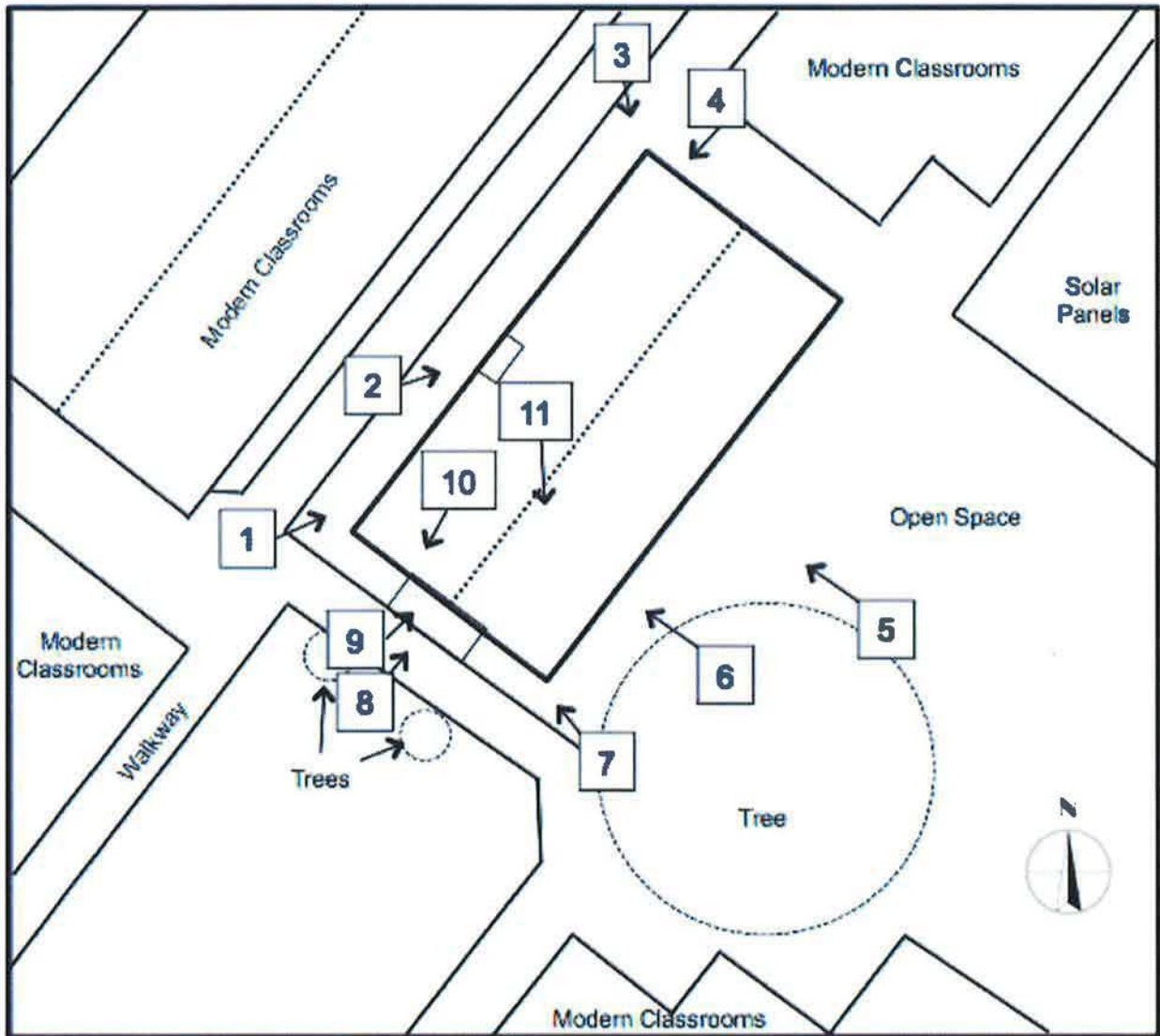
- 1 of 11: AZ\_Yavapai County\_Beaver Creek School\_0001. Exterior view of south and west facades, looking north
- 2 of 11: AZ\_Yavapai County\_Beaver Creek School\_0002. Exterior view of chimney, looking north
- 3 of 11: AZ\_Yavapai County\_Beaver Creek School\_0003. Exterior view of north and west facades, looking south
- 4 of 11: AZ\_Yavapai County\_Beaver Creek School\_0004. Exterior view of hopper window, looking south
- 5 of 11: AZ\_Yavapai County\_Beaver Creek School\_0005. Exterior view of east façade, looking west-northwest
- 6 of 11: AZ\_Yavapai County\_Beaver Creek School\_0006. Exterior view of east façade window, looking west-northwest
- 7 of 11: AZ\_Yavapai County\_Beaver Creek School\_0007. Exterior view of south façade, looking northwest
- 8 of 11: AZ\_Yavapai County\_Beaver Creek School\_0008. Exterior view entrance at south façade, looking north-northeast
- 9 of 11: AZ\_Yavapai County\_Beaver Creek School\_0009. Exterior view of detail of entrance at south façade, looking north-northeast
- 10 of 11: AZ\_Yavapai County\_Beaver Creek School\_0010. Interior view of wood floor, looking south-southwest
- 11 of 11: AZ\_Yavapai County\_Beaver Creek School\_0011. Interior view south classroom, looking south

**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 100 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, DC.

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Beaver Creek School  
Photograph Guide

Scale: 50'

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AZ\_Yavapai County\_Beaver Creek School\_0001



AZ\_Yavapai County\_Beaver Creek School\_0002

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AZ\_Yavapai County\_Beaver Creek School\_0003



AZ\_Yavapai County\_Beaver Creek School\_0004

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AZ\_Yavapai County\_Beaver Creek School\_0005



AZ\_Yavapai County\_Beaver Creek School\_0006



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AZ\_Yavapai County\_Beaver Creek School\_0007



AZ\_Yavapai County\_Beaver Creek School\_0008

Beaver Creek School  
Name of Property

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AZ\_Yavapai County\_Beaver Creek School\_0009



AZ\_Yavapai County\_Beaver Creek School\_0010

Beaver Creek School  
Name of Property

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AZ\_Yavapai County\_Beaver Creek School\_0011

















BEAVER CREEK SCHOOL

Welcome  
Creekers

1732





UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Beaver Creek School

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: ARIZONA, Yavapai

DATE RECEIVED: 8/05/16      DATE OF PENDING LIST: 9/02/16  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 9/19/16      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 9/20/16  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 16000631

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N    DATA PROBLEM: N    LANDSCAPE: N    LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N    PDIL: N    PERIOD: N    PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: Y    SAMPLE: N    SLR DRAFT: N    NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT     RETURN     REJECT    9/20/16 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*Education  
local level  
POS. 1932-1966*

RECOM./CRITERIA A

REVIEWER W. J. ...

DISCIPLINE Historic

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE 9/20/16

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

RECEIVED 2280

AUG - 5 2016

Nat. Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service

**ARIZONA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE (SHPO)  
NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION  
TRANSMITTAL FORM  
\*\*FEDERAL EXPRESS\*\***

**DATE: July 28, 2016**

**TO:**

**J. Paul Loether, Deputy Keeper and Chief  
National Register and National Historic Landmark Programs  
National Register of Historic Places  
1201 Eye St. NW, 8th Fl.  
Washington D.C. 20005-5905**

**FROM:**

**Vivia Strang, CPM  
AZ State Parks  
National Register Coordinator  
State Historic Preservation Office  
1100 West Washington Street  
Phoenix AZ 85007**

**National Register Nominations:**

**Beaver Creek School, Rimrock, Yavapai, AZ  
Regency House, Phoenix, Maricopa, AZ**

**Accompanying documentation is enclosed, as required. Should you have any questions or concerns please contact me at [vstrang@azstateparks.gov](mailto:vstrang@azstateparks.gov) or 602.542.4662.**