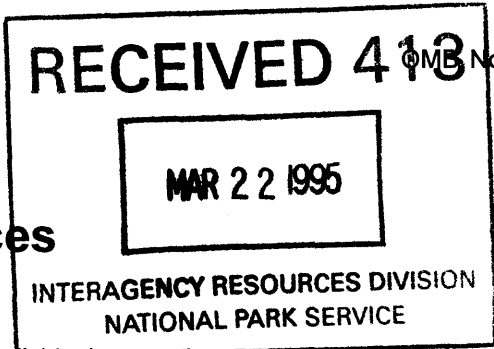


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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determination for individual properties and districts. See instruction in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Calhan Rock Island Railroad Depot

other names/site number 5EP2173

2. Location

street & number 252 ft. west of Denver Street on railroad right of way [N/A] not for publication

city or town Calhan [N/A] vicinity

state Colorado code CO county El Paso code 041 zip code 80808

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this [X] nomination [] request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property [X] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant [] nationally [X] statewide [] locally.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments [].)

Amel Edward Hartman State Historic Preservation Officer March 13, 1995
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Colorado State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register
See continuation sheet [].
- determined eligible for the
National Register
See continuation sheet [].
- determined not eligible for the
National Register.
- removed from the
National Register
- other, explain
See continuation sheet [].

for Edson H. Beall Signature of the Keeper Date 4/20/95

Entered in the
National Register

Calhan Rock Island Railroad Depot

El Paso, Colorado

Name of Property

County/State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- [] private
[X] public-local
[] public-State
[] public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- [X] building(s)
[] district
[] site
[] structure
[] object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not count previously listed resources.)

Contributing Noncontributing
1 buildings
sites
structures
objects
1 0 Total

Name of related multiple property listing.

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Function

(Enter categories from instructions)

Transportation/rail-related

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Vacant/not in use

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and Early 20th Century
American Movements

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete
walls asbestos

roof asphalt

other

Narrative Description

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

Calhan Rock Island Railroad Depot
Name of Property

El Paso County, CO
County/State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history

B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

B removed from its original location.

C a birthplace or grave.

D a cemetery.

E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

F a commemorative property.

G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Transportation

Periods of Significance

1906-1944

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person(s)

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above).

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Rock Island Railroad

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State Agency

Federal Agency

Local Government

University

Other:

Name of repository:

Calhan Town Hall

Calhan Rock Island Railroad Depot

El Paso County, CO

Name of Property

County/State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

A. Zone 13 Easting 560650 Northing 4321045 B. Zone Easting Northing

C. Zone Easting Northing D. Zone Easting Northing

[] See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Carl Breuning, Jr., Mayor and Lora L. Hahn, Town Clerk
organization Town of Calhan date August 19, 1994
street & number P. O. Box 236 telephone (719) 347-2586
city or town Calhan state CO zip code 80808

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional Items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

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

name Town of Calhan
street & number P. O. Box 236 date
city or town Calhan state Colorado zip code 80808

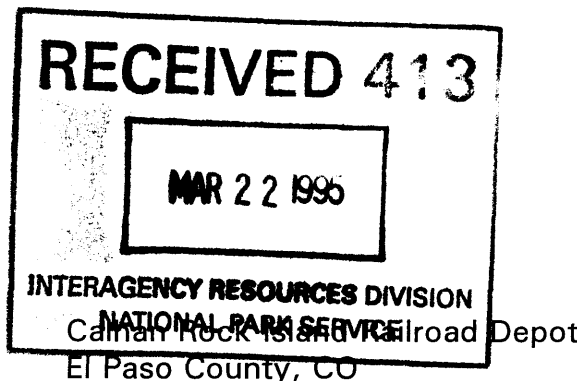
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 1



DESCRIPTION

The Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad (RI) Depot is located on its original site fronting the former railroad right-of-way approximately two hundred feet northwest of the intersection of Denver and Third Streets in Calhan, Colorado. The area immediately to the east, north and west remains much as it did when the depot served as an active part of the Rock Island system. Three modern grain elevators closely flank the building on the south side and block the depot physically and visually from the commercial section of town. The RI tracks were removed in 1993/94.

The depot was built in 1906/07 and is of the basic plan and design commonly built by RI in the early 20th century. The RI depots varied slightly in the location of windows and doors, depending on the lay of the track and the land surrounding them. The wood frame building is approximately 24 feet x 64 feet and is one story. The exterior is asbestos siding over wood clapboards. The date the asbestos siding was added is unknown. The north side of the depot faces the trackbed. Passengers departing a train entered a door on the left (east) portion of the north side. It is possible that a transom existed over the door and was covered by the asbestos. Further east (left) of this door is a double hung, two over two light window (all windows appear to be original and are of this design) that gives a view of the track and train to the passenger waiting area. On the west side of the door, and off center to the east is a bay window containing three double-hung windows. This bay window allowed the station master and line employees to view the train arriving and departing. (Some RI depots had a two-sided triangular, or "V"-shaped bay window.) The freight door is located on the western portion of the north side and is placed to balance the passenger door. The east side of the building houses the passenger waiting room and contains five windows in all -- one previously described is located on the front (north), two windows are on the east end of the building and two more are located on the south side. The south side (that now faces the grain elevators) has three windows, all of which are placed on the eastern portion of the depot. Two windows light the waiting room and a third provides a view for the ticket office. It is possible that a door was originally located on the south side as it was atypical for depots to require passengers walk around the depot rather than through it to access the other side. If such a door existed (perhaps in the location of one of these windows) it was enclosed sometime prior to application of the asbestos siding. Centered on the west end of the depot is a freight door. This door does not match the freight door on the north side and does not appear in a historic photograph of the depot. The earliest time it may have been added would be circa 1920. It was probably added as automotive trucks became both more common and larger than previously used wagons. The historic photograph illustrates that a wagon could easily fit between the depot and the tracks. Maneuvering a larger automotive truck was not likely to be as easy, particularly if it only had rear end freight loading. The building has an asphalt shingled, hipped roof.

The interior is made up of three large rooms. The front door enters the waiting area which is separated from the ticket office by a wall with a window where tickets were taken. Between the waiting room and ticket

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Calhan Rock Island Railroad Depot
El Paso County, CO

office, there is a large metal cage where an old pot belly coal stove provided heat for the entire building. The ticket office is approximately 12 feet by 24 feet, it sits across the center of the building with access to both the passenger waiting room on the east end and the freight storage room on the west end of the building. The freight storage area is approximately 37 feet by 24 feet. Within this storage area is a 12 foot x 8 foot room lined with asbestos siding. This enclosure was probably added and may have been used for the storage of mail.

All the floors are concrete. The interior walls in the waiting and office areas are plastered with wood trim around the windows and baseboards. The interior walls of the large storage area are unfinished.

At one time there were at least nine Rock Island depots between Colorado Springs and the Kansas state line. As the RI line declined to eventual abandonment, various depots were sold or destroyed. Five RI depots remain standing and their locations and conditions are identified below:

- | | |
|---------|---|
| Simla | Sold and moved to Strasburg. It was converted to a private residence sheathed in brick, thus obscuring almost all identifying characteristics of the depot. |
| Peyton | (Originally called Mayfield) Sold to the Methodist church in Calhan, relocated there, and incorporated into one of the church buildings. |
| Seibert | Sold, moved, and is now a gas station near Interstate 70. This depot was of the same RI design as the Calhan depot, except for the bay window (the Seibert depot's bay window was "V"-shaped.) |
| Bethune | This depot is almost identical to the Calhan depot and is in the best physical condition of the remaining depots. It was sold and moved to Burlington where it has been restored and placed in an outdoor "historic town" museum. |

The Calhan Depot is one of only two Rock Island depots in Colorado that are intact and it is the only such depot in its original location, thus maintaining its geographic context and historical integrity.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

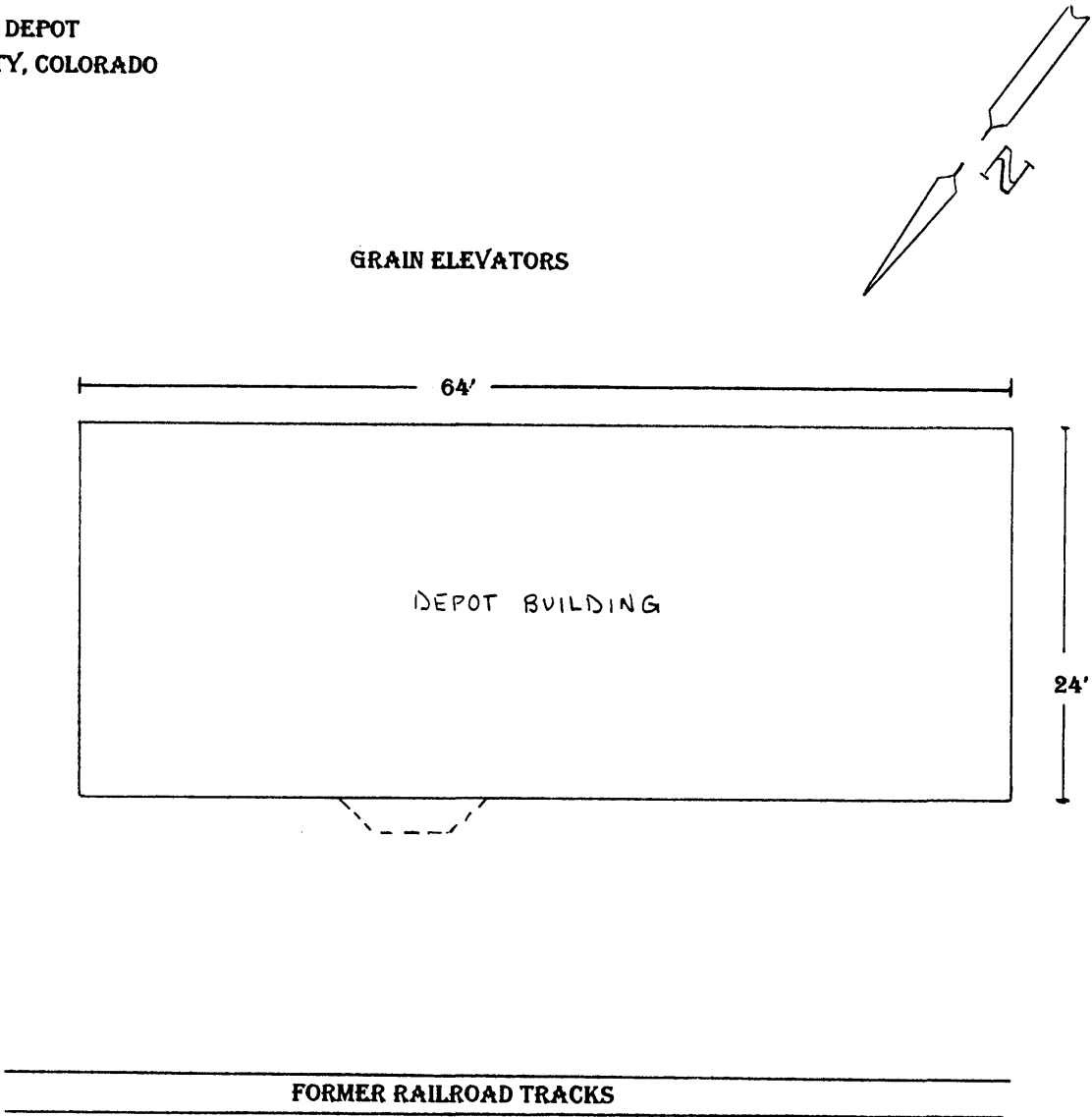
Section number 7 Page 3

Calhan Rock Island Railroad Depot
El Paso County, CO

ROCK ISLAND RAILROAD DEPOT
CALHAN, EL PASO COUNTY, COLORADO

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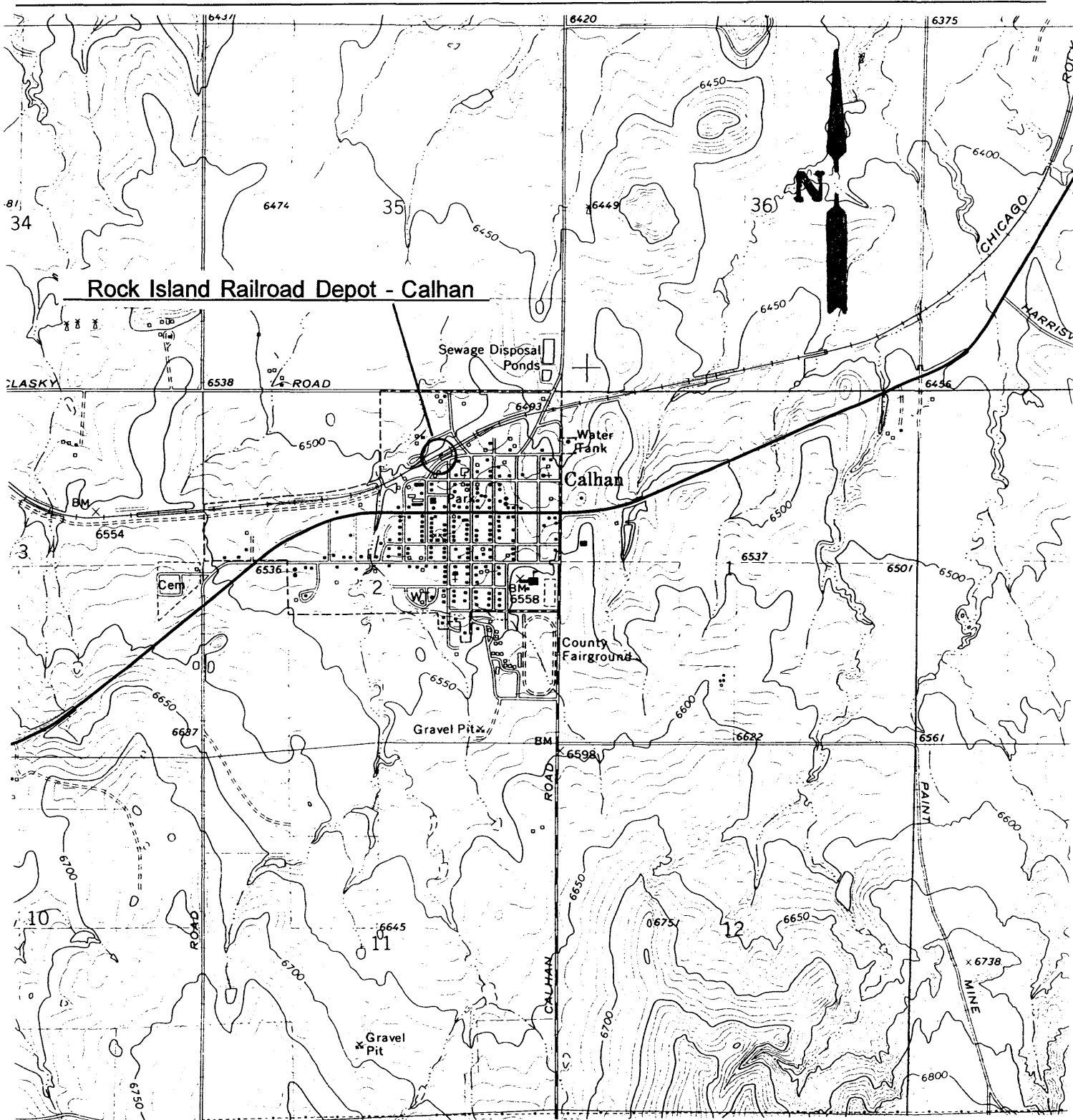


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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4 Map 1 of 2

Calhan Rock Island Railroad Depot
El Paso County, CO



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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 5

Calhan Rock Island Railroad Depot
El Paso County, CO

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Rock Island Depot in Calhan is eligible for the National Register under criterion A in the area of transportation for its association with railroad transportation in the Calhan area. The building is also the last surviving depot of the Rock Island Railroad in Colorado that remains in its original location. Although asbestos siding now covers the original wood siding, the building retains its basic form, fenestration and architectural details and retains a high degree of integrity of location, design, setting, feeling and association.

Early History of the Rock Island Railroad

Manifest Destiny fueled the drive to settle the American West and unite the East and West coasts in the 19th century and the railroad played a major role in these goals. As the push was being made to complete the first transcontinental line, short lines or feeder railroads branched off from the mainlines and brought settlers and homesteaders to lands not yet occupied by anglo-europeans. In the early 1880s, the Rock Island Railroad [RI] was interested in expanding its line westward for connection with the proposed Colorado Midland [Midland] that was to run out of Colorado Springs to the mining communities. The Chicago, Kansas, and Nebraska Railway (CK&N) was incorporated in 1885 as a wholly-owned subsidiary of the RI to construct the expanded route. CK&N conducted surveys, acquired rights-of-way and other properties to extend a line through Kansas to Colorado Springs. CK&N began construction from Horton, Kansas on July 1, 1886. Grading stopped for the winter of 1886 in Norton, Kansas. By the spring of 1888 the grading turned southwest and reached Limon by early summer. The grading crews reached the edge of Colorado Springs by September of that year.

The first scheduled RI passenger trains between Colorado Springs and Goodland, Kansas started daily service on November 4, 1888. (After 1888 all scheduling is listed under the Rock Island name and by 1891 the CK&N was formally absorbed by RI.) Initially, RI trains went from Chicago to Colorado Springs (RI's "Rocky Mountain Limited" offered 24 hour service between the two cities) then on to Denver over Rio Grande or Santa Fe tracks. The RI connection with the Midland proved valuable to both railroads, however passenger interchange was never up to RI's expectations. The railroad provided transportation to many immigrant families who came into the area lured by cheap land under the Homestead Act and the attractive advertising produced by the railroads. Immigrants to this region of eastern Colorado were often Russians and Slovaks who found the region similar to the steppes of their homeland.

After the Union Pacific granted RI use of its line from Limon to Denver in April 1889, the RI stopped its run from Colorado Springs to Denver. In 1937, the RI introduced its new passenger trains, the "Rockets," and the "Rocky Mountain Rocket" began service between Chicago and Denver on November 12, 1939. These trains had specially designed two-part engines. The second section, powered by its gas-electric powered

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Calhan Rock Island Railroad Depot
El Paso County, CO

"Rocket Juniors," disconnected from the main train at Limon to make the run through Calhan to Colorado Springs.

Rock Island Depots

The availability of water often determined locations of depots in the West. There were at least nine RI designed passenger depot stops between the Kansas state line and Colorado Springs. Facilities at the stops varied according to how quickly communities grew. In some undeveloped locations a boxcar sufficed as the depot. When population warranted it, more substantial depots provided both freight and passenger service.

The RI built two standard type of depots in Colorado. The first type, actually built by the CK&N as it constructed the original track, was a two story wood frame Queen Anne style building. It was distinctive because the second story was smaller, roughly two-thirds the length of the first story. The second story provided living quarters for the station master and was off-set, situated over the office and passenger side, rather than centered over the first floor. Because the line ran east-west and depots were oriented parallel to the track, depots were referred to as either an "east ender" or "west ender" depending upon which end of the building the second story rose. There are no remaining examples of the older style of RI depots in Colorado. Calhan's first depot was destroyed, probably by fire, and was likely of the style described above.

The Calhan depot that stands today was built in 1906-1907 and is of the second, simpler, and later type of depots that the RI constructed. It is a single story wood frame building with a hipped gable roof and bay window. No living quarters are contained in this depot. A single privy divided for men and women stood just east of the depot. The railroad built an extensive complex at Calhan. In addition to the depot, there was a section house, bunk houses, tool houses, a baggage building, a water tank and pumphouse. A small stockyards occupied the area northeast and across the tracks from the depot and provided a loading point for area ranchers.

Settlement and Growth of Calhan

Settlement of the area around what would become Calhan began in the 1880s with the establishment of a number of ranches. A post office operated on a ranch on the Big Sandy Creek three miles to the north of what became Calhan. The arrival of the Rock Island Railroad in 1888 promised new prosperity and a link with the outside world. The first train came through on November 5th and the post office was moved from the Big Sandy to the Calhan depot on November 24th. Eli Woodring actually platted the town but did not do so until 1895.

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Calhan Rock Island Railroad Depot
El Paso County, CO

The town received its name from Michael Calahan, a section foreman for the Rock Island. Either through error or intent, the name was shortened to the present Calhan. The location was chosen because of the need for a locomotive watering station and the availability of water at the site. A hand dug well lined with bricks lay underground just northwest of the depot. Its 40 foot depth and 32,000 gallon capacity provided water both for the passing trains and the town's residents.

The town itself grew slowly and by 1895 claimed a population of only forty. Russell Gates Mercantile Co. opened a store in 1896. A grain elevator and lumber yard were constructed by 1907. The new century brought a degree of prosperity to Calhan and the population swelled to 400 by 1910 and 500 in 1920. The Calhan Fair was first held in 1905 and provided additional, if short lived, passenger traffic for the RI. The annual event was expanded in 1910 and renamed the El Paso County Fair. The RI began running special trains to Calhan from Colorado Springs for the fair. The RI would continue the special fair runs until 1925.

Decline of the Rock Island

A folk song immortalized by "Leadbelly" Huddie Ledbetter proclaimed that, "the Rock Island Line is a mighty fine line." Despite the words of praise, the railroad began to decline in the 1930s. Automobiles provided an affordable transportation alternative and a sense of independence. The Depression further worsened the Rock Island's financial condition. World War II brought renewed life to railroads and the RI was no exception as it carried troops to Fort Carson and Patterson Field. The end of gasoline rationing, general prosperity, and Americans' love of automobiles proved increasingly damaging to the railroads in the United States in the post WWII period.

The Colorado climate always made track maintenance costly. Blizzards, dust storms, and flash floods regularly sweep across the plains and reeked havoc with the tracks. A June, 1965 flood alone washed out the track in 67 places along the 21 mile stretch between Calhan and Elsmer. In the face of ever declining profits, the RI reduced its services. The last passenger train passed through Calhan on October 16, 1966. Freight service was reduced from two to a single run a day during the 1960s. The RI retained the Calhan depot to serve primarily as a section house. In the early 1970s the trains stopped altogether as the Rock Island slipped into bankruptcy.

A short lived renaissance began in 1985 with the formation of the Cadillac Lake City Railway Company. The new firm began operating over the old rails from Limon to Falcon, Colorado. The depot in Calhan served as company headquarters and the only depot along the route. The new company provided limited freight service and occasional passenger excursions including some to the El Paso County Fair. Despite plans for additional service and diner-train excursions, financial success eluded the new line and service ended in 1986. In 1993/94

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Section number 8/9/10 Page 8

Calhan Rock Island Railroad Depot
El Paso County, CO

the rails between Falcon and Limon were removed for scrape and the weed choked roadbed saw its last activity. The town of Calhan acquired the depot from Elbert County in 1993 for the price of one dollar.

As the last Rock Island depot in Colorado remaining in its original location, the Calhan depot has statewide significance.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

King, Larry L., *History of Calhan and Vicinity, 1888-1988*, (Simla, CO: 1987)

Breuning, Carl Jr., early resident of Calhan, interview Lora L. Hahn

Doty, Michael C., and E.M. McFarland, "Rocketing to the Rockies," *Colorado Rail Annual No. 17*, (Golden, CO: Colorado Railroad Museum, 1987)

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nomination boundaries include the footprint of the depot forming a rectangle measuring 24' x 64', located on the former Rock Island Railroad right-of-way whose southeast side is located ninety feet north of Colorado Avenue and whose northeast side is located 252' northwest of Denver Street in Calhan, Colorado.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundaries include just the footprint of the depot in its original location which is the land historically associated with the building.

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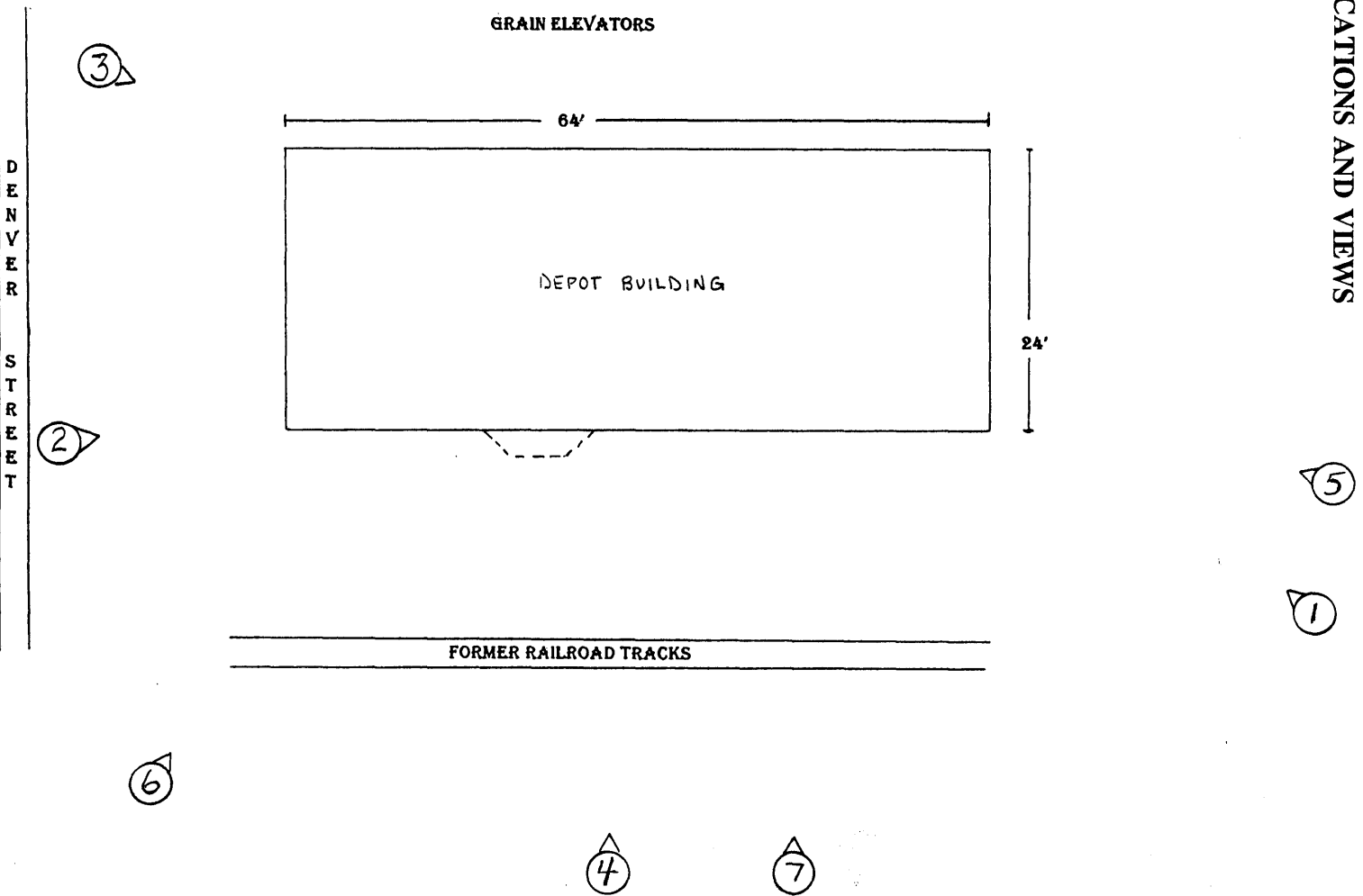
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Calhan Rock Island Railroad Depot
El Paso County, CO

PHOTOGRAPHS LOCATIONS AND VIEWS

ROCK ISLAND RAILROAD DEPOT
CALHAN, EL PASO COUNTY, COLORADO



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National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

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Calhan Rock Island Railroad Depot
El Paso County, CO

PHOTOGRAPH LOG

The following information is common to all photographs:

Name of Property: Calhan Rock Island Railroad Depot
Location: Calhan, El Paso County, Colo.
Photographer: Lora L. Hahn
Date: August 20, 1994
Location of Negatives: Calhan Town Hall

Photo #1: Northwest and southwest elevations, view to the east.

Photo #2: Northeast elevation, view to the southwest.

Photo #3: Northeast and southeast elevations, view to the west.

Photo #4: Trackside (northwest) elevation, view to the southeast.

Photo #5: Northwest and southwest elevations, view to the east.

Photo #6: Northeast and northwest elevations, view to the south.

Photo #7: Trackside (northwest) elevation, view to the southeast.

Photo #8: Southeast elevation, view to the north.

Photo #9: Southeast and southwest elevations, view to the north.