

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED NOV 24 1975

DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Coombs Village (42Ga34)

AND/OR COMMON

Anasazi State Park

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

On the north edge of the town of Boulder

\_\_\_ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Boulder

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

2

STATE

Utah

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

CODE

049

COUNTY

Garfield

CODE

017

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

\_\_\_ DISTRICT

\_\_\_ BUILDING(S)

\_\_\_ STRUCTURE

SITE

\_\_\_ OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

PUBLIC

\_\_\_ PRIVATE

\_\_\_ BOTH

**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

\_\_\_ IN PROCESS

\_\_\_ BEING CONSIDERED

**STATUS**

\_\_\_ OCCUPIED

UNOCCUPIED

\_\_\_ WORK IN PROGRESS

**ACCESSIBLE**

\_\_\_ YES: RESTRICTED

\_\_\_ YES: UNRESTRICTED

\_\_\_ NO

**PRESENT USE**

\_\_\_ AGRICULTURE

\_\_\_ COMMERCIAL

\_\_\_ EDUCATIONAL

\_\_\_ ENTERTAINMENT

\_\_\_ GOVERNMENT

\_\_\_ INDUSTRIAL

\_\_\_ MILITARY

MUSEUM

\_\_\_ PARK

\_\_\_ PRIVATE RESIDENCE

\_\_\_ RELIGIOUS

\_\_\_ SCIENTIFIC

\_\_\_ TRANSPORTATION

\_\_\_ OTHER: state park

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Utah State Parks Commission

STREET & NUMBER

1596 West North Temple

CITY, TOWN

Salt Lake City

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE

Utah

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Garfield County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Panguitch

STATE

Utah

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Utah Statewide Archeological Survey

DATE

1955

\_\_\_ FEDERAL  STATE \_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Utah Museum of Natural History, 113 Stewart Bldg, University of Utah

CITY, TOWN

Salt Lake City

STATE

Utah

## 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

---

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Coombs Site is located at the northern end of the small town of Boulder which is situated on the southern flank of the Aquarius Plateau, in the transitional zone between the fairly smooth, well watered, vegetation-clad slopes of the plateau and the rugged, sere, barren canyon lands that border the Colorado River. The elevation here is approximately 6700 feet. Boulder Creek, a rushing mountain stream tributary to the Escalante River, flows through the community a short distance west of the site. The site itself occupies the top of a hill which rises about 20 feet above the surrounding terrain on the north, south, and east sides. On the west, the hill slopes to higher ground. Today, there are meadows, alfalfa fields, and garden plots around the hill on which the site is located. Before construction of an irrigation system, the hill, and the country around it, probably was covered with scattered growth of sagebrush, greasewood, junipers, and grasses.

The location is one which would have been quite amenable to settlement by prehistoric agricultural populations. They may have even practiced irrigation, since local residents speak of having found what appeared to be evidence of ditches. Other resources were also readily available: game animals, especially on the Aquarius Plateau; building materials (sandstone, caliche, wood); pottery clay; igneous rock and chalcedonies for stone tools.

Before excavation, surface remains indicated that the site appeared to be the largest and most significant one within or adjacent to areas that would be flooded by the Glen Canyon Dam west of the Colorado River. For this reason, the site was excavated in 1958 and 1959, as part of the Upper Colorado River Basin Archeological Salvage Project for which the University of Utah was responsible through contract agreement with the National Park Service, even though Coombs Village is 45 miles north of the Reservoir.

The site was only partially excavated, but 83 structures were uncovered, many in multi-unit larger structures arranged around courtyards. Most of the structures were oriented 15-20 degrees west of magnetic North, or almost exactly true North. Of the 83 structures, 67 had burned. The excavators estimated that 67% of the habitations were occupied when fire raged through them. A very wide range of variation in architectural types were represented, partially a result of functional differences (i.e., storage vs. habitation). But the variation was also a result of the natural deposits on the site. All the pit structures, for example, are located on the south slope of the hill where there are soft, sandy deposits. The surface structures are located on the top of the hill; here, caliche deposits and bedrock would have made excavation difficult. The excavated structures consisted of the following types: 1) 35 storage units constructed of masonry or jacal and masonry, 25% of which had been burned, 2) 37 habitations of jacal or jacal and masonry, 34 of which had been burned, 3) 10 pithouses, 7 of which had been burned, and 4) 1 ramada, also burned.

Stone implements used in food preparation were found in abundance throughout the site. Perhaps the most impressive were the numerous mealing bins (many located inside habitation structures), manos and metates, and mortars and pestles indicative of the great amount of time and energy expended in the preparation of vegetable foods. "Facilities for the storage of food, particularly vegetable foods, were present in the form of several types of masonry and jacal storage chambers, and in bins and sub-floor pottery vessels within habitations. Many large pottery containers were designed for storage of food or water" (Lister and Lister 1961:103).

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DATE ENTERED	WJK 1975

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE Two

Extensive midden, or trash, deposits were present at the Coombs Site. The deepest accumulation of cultural deposits occurred about midway down the south side of the hill where most of the village trash had been dumped. This refuse midden contained from 25 to 44 inches of stratified material. Elsewhere, over the entire site, lesser amounts of trash and debris had been scattered.

The excavations yielded an extremely large collection of artifacts, including the following:

Pottery--over 65,000 sherds and nearly 300 whole or restorable vessels.

Stone objects--over 900 stone tools, the greatest number of which were obtained from jacal structures.

Ornaments--beads (associated with a burial) of stone, turquoise, and shell; pendants, and a turquoise necklace.

Bone and antler objects--163 objects which included a wide variety of tools.

Food bone scrap--an abundance of animal bones were recovered, indicated the importance of hunting. The most common was mule deer, followed by bighorn sheep; domesticated dogs were also present.

Vegetal foods--carbonized maize and squash seeds were recovered.

Burials--13 individuals were recovered, but many more had been removed previously by local residents or earlier expeditions. Almost all came from the deep sandy deposits on the southern slope of the site. A variety of mortuary offerings were found associated with the bodies.

The uniformity of cultural remains (pottery, chipped stone, etc.) has been interpreted to indicate that the site was occupied for a 50 to 100-year period, with the maximum population estimated at ca. 200 individuals.

The ruins of the Coombs Village are presently incorporated into the Anasazi State Park. A fine museum has been built adjacent to the main excavations where there are several exhibits showing the material excavated from the site, reconstruction of the village, and tableaux depicting various scenes of aboriginal life. Marked pathways behind the museum allow visitors to walk through areas in the process of excavation. Picnic facilities are also present adjacent to the museum.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES A.D. 1075-1150, estimated BUILDER/ARCHITECT assigned to the Kayenta Anasazi

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Coombs Site appears to have been the largest settlement along the southern slopes of the Aquarius Plateau; as such, it must have exerted considerable influence on peoples residing in its immediate environs. Large open sites are not common in this area or in the adjacent areas which have been subject to investigations (e.g., the Kaiparowits Plateau, the Escalante River drainage, the triangle area between the San Juan and Colorado Rivers, and the right bank tributaries of the Colorado). Excavated sites simply do not approach the Coombs Site in complexity of architectural form, wealth of artifacts, amount of refuse, or sheer size.

The analysis of the large quantity of data recovered during excavation of the site is extremely significant, in that it shed considerable light on our understanding of various aspects of prehistoric lifeways, and the relationship of various groups over a wide geographic region. On the basis of pottery analysis, the site is believed to have been occupied for a relatively short period of time from A.D. 1075 to perhaps 1150, by a population of approximately 200 people.

The village is believed to have been established by people from the San Juan drainage to the southeast. The ceramic assemblage from the site is strongly affiliated with the Kayenta region. However, based on the amount of Fremont ceramics, there was also considerable contact with Fremont populations. There is also evidence for contact with the Virgin, Mesa Verde, and Chaco areas, based on ceramic as well as other kinds of evidence.

The reason for the abandonment of the site after a short period of time is not known. Ultimate cause may be associated with fire. It is postulated that a major holocaust spread through the village at its termination. "Whether it was a result of conflict, accident or intentional action we cannot state, although the latter seems most probable. The town was never reoccupied. The Coombs site is but one more example of the burning of Anasazi villages in the San Juan. Morris (1939, 41-2) has written of the great frequency of burning in archeological sites in the La Plata area." (Lister and Lister 1961:10).

Lister, Robert H. and Florence C. Lister

1961 The Coombs Site, Part III, Summary and Conclusions. University of Utah Anthropological Papers, No. 41, Glen Canyon Series No. 8. Salt Lake City.

Morris, Earl H.

1939 Archaeological Studies in the La Plata District. Carnegie Institution of Washington, Publication 519.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Lister, Robert H., J. Richard Ambler and Florence Lister  
 1961 The Coombs Site, Parts I, II, III. University of Utah Anthropological Papers, No. 41, Glen Canyon Series, No. 8. Salt Lake City.
- Morss, Noel  
 1931 The Ancient Culture of the Fremont River in Utah. Papers of the Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology, Vol. 12, No. 3. Cambridge.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 5.9 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	<u>12</u>	<u>462860</u>	<u>4195760</u>	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Claudia F. Berry/Archeologist

ORGANIZATION

Utah State Historical Society

DATE

October 20, 1975

STREET & NUMBER

603 East South Temple

TELEPHONE

(801) 533-5755

CITY OR TOWN

Salt Lake City

STATE

Utah

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL X

STATE     

LOCAL     

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Melvin T. Smith*

TITLE

Melvin T. Smith, State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

November 12, 1975

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER	
<i>Listing</i>	DATE <u>11/1/76</u>
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION	DATE <u>12/31/75</u>
ATTEST: <i>Ronald W. Greenberg</i>	
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER	

DWELLING

SERVICE BLDG.

BORZOV PIT

# COOMBS SITE

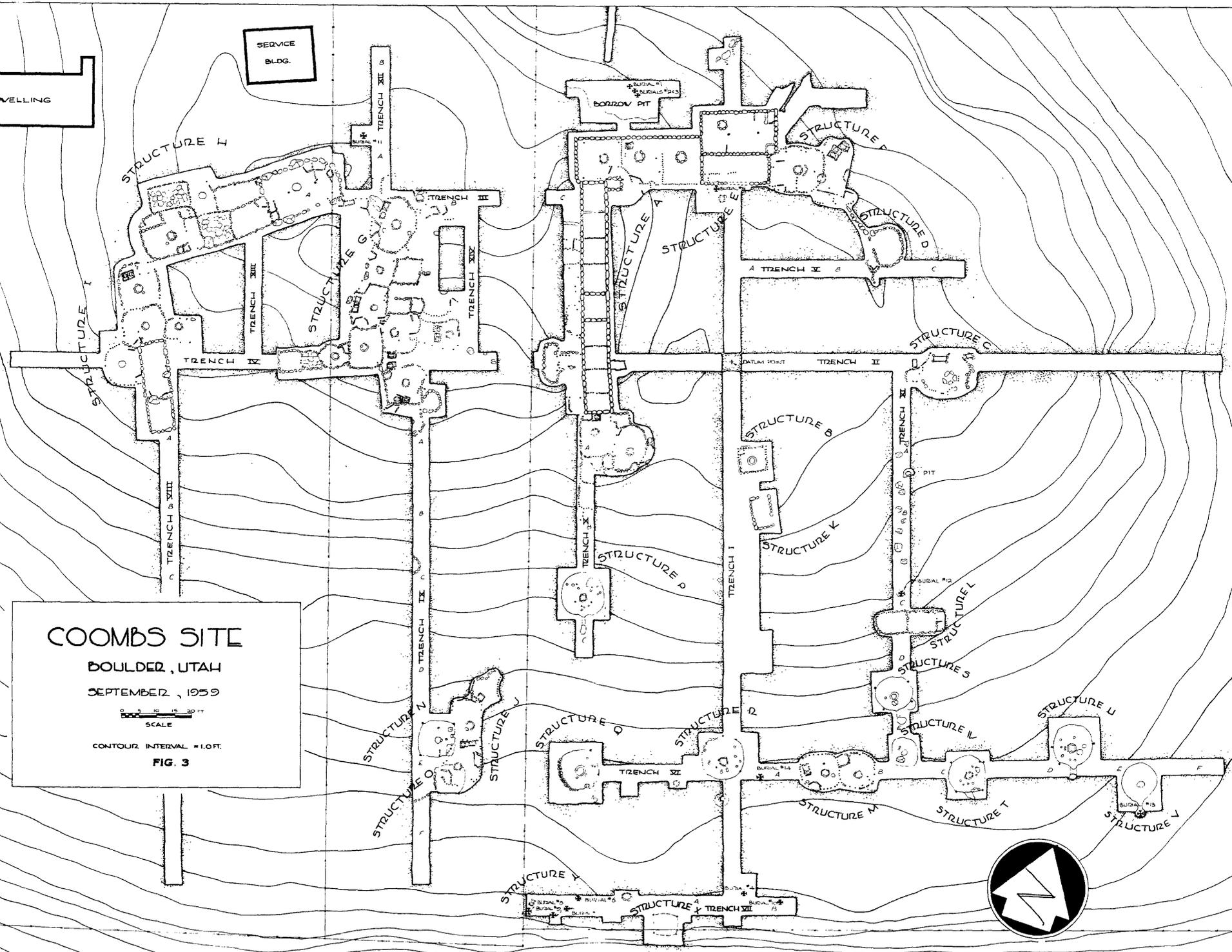
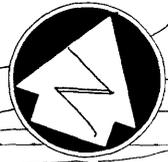
BOULDER, UTAH

SEPTEMBER 12, 1959



CONTOUR INTERVAL = 1.0 FT.

FIG. 3



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY MAP FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED NOV 24 1975
DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSE WITH MAP

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Coombs Village (42Ga34)

AND/OR COMMON

Anasazi State Park

**2 LOCATION**

CITY, TOWN Boulder

VICINITY OF

COUNTY Garfield

STATE Utah

**3 MAP REFERENCE**

SOURCE The Coombs Site, Part II, by Robert H. Lister, J. Richard Ambler, and Florence C. Lister. University of Utah Anthropological Papers, No. 41.

SCALE

1" = 29' (approx.)

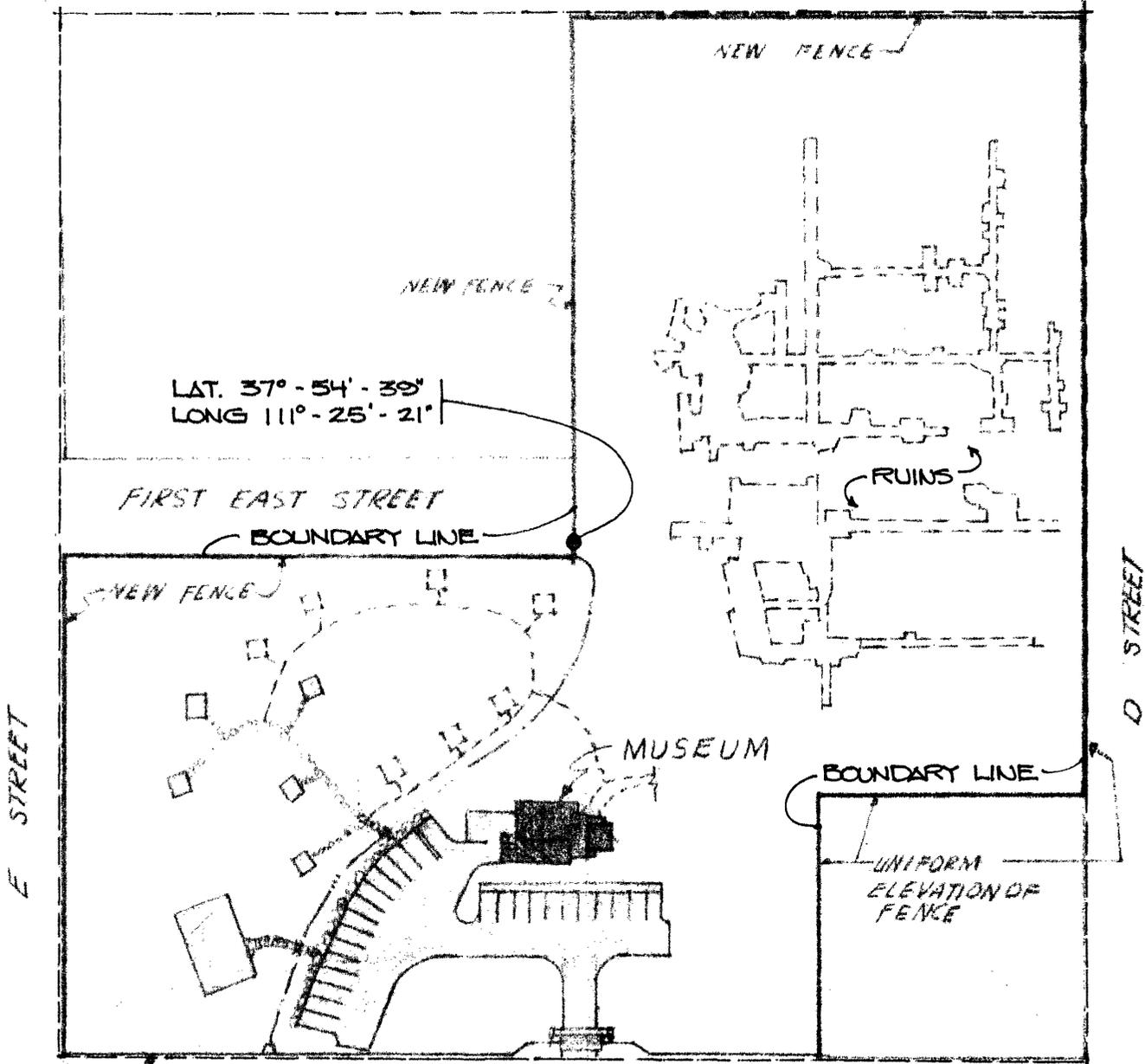
DATE

October, 1960

**4 REQUIREMENTS**

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

1. PROPERTY BOUNDARIES
2. NORTH ARROW
3. UTM REFERENCES



LAT. 37°-54'-39"  
 LONG 111°-25'-21"

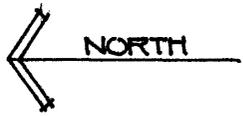
FIRST EAST STREET  
 BOUNDARY LINE

MUSEUM

BOUNDARY LINE

UNIFORM  
 ELEVATION OF  
 FENCE

CANYON ROAD



UNIFORM ELEVATION OF FENCE  
 ON WEST SIDE OF SITE.  
 ALL FENCE SHALL BE 5' INSIDE PROPERTY LINE. SEE SMALL DRAWING SHEET  
 IN PLENS.

MASTER PLAN

**COOMBS VILLAGE**  
 BOULDER, UTAH      DEC 72

SCALE = 1" = 100'

UTM References 12/462860/4195760



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY MAP FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
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DATE ENTERED	JAN 2 1976

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSE WITH MAP

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Coombs Village (42Ga34)

AND/OR COMMON

Anasazi State Park

**2 LOCATION**

CITY, TOWN Boulder

VICINITY OF

COUNTY Garfield

STATE Utah

**3 MAP REFERENCE**

SOURCE Utah Parks and Recreation, Plot Plan Sheet 2 of 13

SCALE 1" = 100'

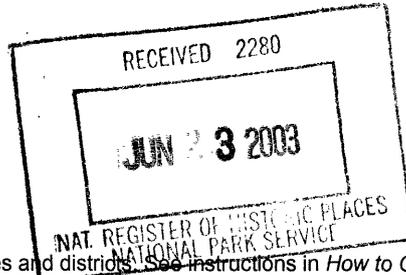
DATE November, 1969

**4 REQUIREMENTS**

TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

1. PROPERTY BOUNDARIES
2. NORTH ARROW
3. UTM REFERENCES

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**



**National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form**

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

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Coombs Village Site

other name/site number 42Ga34, Anasazi State Park Museum

**2. Location**

street name On the north edge of the town of Boulder  not for publication

city or town Boulder  vicinity

state Utah code UT county Garfield code 017 zip code 84716

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

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

*[Signature]* 6/15/03  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Utah Division of State History, Office of Historic Preservation  
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:) \_\_\_\_\_

*[Signature]* 8/4/03  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Coombs Village Site  
Name of Property

Boulder, Garfield County, Utah  
City, County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(check as many boxes as apply)

**Category of Property**  
(check only one box)

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
_____	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
		Total

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

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Function**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

**Current Function**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**foundation** \_\_\_\_\_

**walls** \_\_\_\_\_

**roof** \_\_\_\_\_

**other** \_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

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

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 7

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 7 Page 1

Coombs Village Site, Boulder, Garfield County, UT

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### Narrative Description

The Coombs Site (42GA34) is a 12<sup>th</sup> century Ancestral Puebloan (Anasazi) habitation site located at Anasazi State Park Museum in Boulder, Utah. Cumulatively, excavations over the past half-century have yielded approximately 162,000 artifacts distributed across nearly 100 room structures. Dendrochronological data indicate that the site was constructed at latest by about A.D. 1160 (Marwitt and Fry 1973) and was occupied until approximately AD 1235.

Three types of architecture have been identified at this site: jacal, Kayenta masonry, and pit structures (Lister and Lister 1961). In addition, one example of a four-post roofed shade, or ramada, was identified on the southern slope of the site (Lister 1960). A minimum of two distinct pueblo units, one L-shaped and one U-shaped, were also identified. These consist of both habitation and storage units, while additional isolated habitation and storage units are scattered across the site. In addition, ten pit structures have been excavated on the southern slope of the site. Features within the pithouses suggest they were likely used for habitation rather than ceremony, thus the reference to them as pithouses rather than kivas (Lister and Lister 1961). To date, no confirmed kivas have been identified at the Coombs Site.

Estimates suggest that although the major structures have been identified, only about 50 percent of the site has been investigated. In fact, outlines of unexcavated rooms are visible across the site. Excavations conducted since the Park opened in 1970 have modified our interpretation of the site structure and future excavations will undoubtedly modify it further. A full re-recording of the site is currently in progress.

Based on architectural forms, artifact types, and the ceramic assemblage retrieved from the site, the original interpretation of the site places it firmly within the Kayenta branch of the Anasazi (Lister 1959; Lister, Ambler, and Lister 1960; Lister and Lister 1961). The presence of intrusive ceramic wares, as demonstrated by design elements and temper type, indicate contact with neighboring Virgin Anasazi and Fremont peoples (Lister and Lister 1961). A small percentage of Mesa Verdean ceramics also suggests contact or trade with that distant center (Lister and Lister 1961).

Coombs Village Site  
Name of Property

Boulder, Garfield County, Utah  
City, County and State

**8. Description**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

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

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

**Criteria Considerations**

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

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

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

**Areas of Significance**

(enter categories from instructions)

---



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---

**Period of Significance**

---



---

**Significant Dates**

---



---

**Significant Persons**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

---

**Cultural Affiliation**

---



---

**Architect/Builder**

---



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See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 8

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

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

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 9

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 8 Page 1

Coombs Village Site, Boulder, Garfield County, UT

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### Narrative Statement of Significance

In 1889, Sam Sheffield established a homestead just southeast of the prehistoric village and before long discovered the "Indian Mound" (LeFevre 1973). From the pottery, projectile points, and grinding stones he found on the surface, Sheffield believed the site to be a burial ground of a more ancient group than those he had previously encountered in Utah.

The site attracted little attention from the early residents of Boulder, although they sometimes collected "arrow heads" and other stone tools, metates, manos, and pottery sherds. As Boulder developed, so did construction activities and the resulting knowledge of the presence of an "Indian Mound." Morss (1931) reported that some burials had been uncovered when the southern slope of the site was being used as a "sand pit." Lister (1959) indicates that widening of a road along the base of the hill exposed additional burials and cultural material, thus stimulating local pot hunting activities at the site. Despite these non-archaeological collecting activities, the majority of the site deposits remained relatively undisturbed.

Professional archaeological investigations at the Coombs Site were initiated in 1927 when members of the Claflin-Emerson Expedition of the Peabody Museum visited the site (Morss 1931). Although primarily a reconnaissance program, the Expedition prompted Peabody Museum personnel to initiate a program of survey and excavation a year later (Gunnerson 1969). Directing work in this geographic area was archaeologist Noel Morss, who tested the Coombs Site in 1928 and reported his findings in 1931. Morss (1931) identified the remnants of several masonry rooms at the top of the hill, and described the finding of three burials in a sandy drift along the southern slope of the site. Morss reported that the burials were in a flexed position and all skulls were occipitally deformed. He also described mortuary offerings found with the remains, primarily ceramic vessels (Morss 1931).

In addition to the vessels from the burials, Morss collected a sample of sherds for analytical purposes. The vast majority of pottery was corrugated, followed by black-on-white, red ware, polychrome, and plain gray sherds. He identified the pottery as "Proto-Kayenta," or what is now called Tusayan ware, concluding that pueblo peoples occupied the Coombs Site, whose material culture resembled that of the Kayenta peoples in northern Arizona. Morss also noted that the material remains at Coombs differed from those of the Fremont culture to the north.

LeFevre (1973) indicated that a "Dr. Kerr, a Utah professor," also conducted a small excavation in 1928 with the assistance of local residents. LeFevre reports that a skeleton was exhumed and put on display at the University of Utah.

In 1955, the Coombs Site was examined and recorded by James H. Gunnerson as part of a reconnaissance conducted by the Utah Statewide Archaeological Survey for the Department of Anthropology of the University of Utah. Because Gunnerson's primary research concern at that time was the Fremont culture, little was said

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 8 Page 2

Coombs Village Site, Boulder, Garfield County, UT

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about the site except to note that the artifacts from the site did not resemble those of the Fremont. Gunnerson recommended that no further work be conducted at the site (Gunnerson 1955).

Despite Gunnerson's recommendation, extensive excavations would begin three years later as an adjunct to the 1957 Upper Colorado River Basin Archaeological Salvage Project. Participants in the project failed to locate any sites in the Glen Canyon area that would compare with the Coombs Site either in size or in volume of cultural remains. Additional importance was assigned the site because of its intermediate position between the Anasazi in the south and the Fremont to the north (Lister 1959). The 1958 excavation succeeded in uncovering three distinct structures, a borrow pit, three burials, and thousands of artifacts. The excavations verified the importance of the site to the prehistory of the area. Subsequently, plans were formulated-even before the 1958 excavation was completed-to return during the summer of 1959 to continue investigations (Lister et al. 1960).

The 1959 season revealed a much larger portion of the site than had been exposed in 1958. Excavations continued in those areas explored in 1958 and expanded into other portions of the site. Twelve additional exploratory trenches were opened, which identified 12 surface structures, 10 pit houses, 11 burials, and several miscellaneous structures. As with the 1958 excavation, thousands of artifacts were recovered and analyzed (Lister, Ambler, and Lister 1960).

Following the 1959 season, all structures were covered with plastic and backfilled in anticipation of including the site in the Utah State Park system. The results of the University of Utah excavations have been published in three volumes that comprise the original Coombs Site Report (Lister 1959; Lister et al. 1960; Lister and Lister 1961). In all, the University of Utah excavations identified 77 masonry or jacal rooms, 10 pit houses, one ramada, and 14 burials.

The site was designated a State Park in 1960 after the State, the town of Boulder, and Garfield County purchased the private lands containing the ruins. Prior to the construction of the Visitors Center, the University of Utah conducted a magnetometer survey and limited test excavations in 1969 (Hammond and Marwitt 1970). As a result of these investigations, the location of the Visitors Center was moved to avoid a pit house and extramural activity areas. The visitor center opened in 1970 and the Coombs Site became the first State Park featuring archaeology and archaeological ruins. Subsequently, the site was placed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1976.

Small-scale excavations were conducted intermittently between 1970 and 2002 under the supervision of Anasazi State Park staff. These investigations, in conjunction with laboratory analyses of the collections (Morgenstein and Latady 1997; Prince et al. 1997; Roberts 1997), identified several additional structures and a number of burials. A more thorough discussion of the site history is provided in a number of sources, listed in the bibliography below.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 9 Page 1

Coombs Village Site, Boulder, Garfield County, UT

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 9 Page 2

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 9 Page 3

Coombs Village Site, Boulder, Garfield County, UT

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 9 Page 4

Coombs Village Site, Boulder, Garfield County, UT

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Coombs Village Site  
Name of Property

Boulder, Garfield County, Utah  
City, County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property \_\_\_\_\_ acre(s)

### UTM References

(Place additional boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

1 1/2 ////// //////  
Zone Easting Northing

2 / ////// //////  
Zone Easting Northing

3 / ////// //////  
Zone Easting Northing

4 / ////// //////  
Zone Easting Northing

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Property Tax No.

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 10

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Lisa Westwood/Archeologist  
organization Anasazi State Park Museum date May 30, 2003  
street & number 460 North Highway 12 telephone 435/335-7308  
city or town Boulder state UT zip code 84716

### 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

name/title Utah State Parks  
street & number PO Box 146001 telephone (801) 538-7220  
city or town Salt Lake City state UT zip code 84114

**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.