

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



1227

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Back Ranch Historic District  
other names/site number AZ 0:05:42 (ASM), William B. Back Ranch (Historic American Building Survey # AZ - 217 A & B), Montezuma Castle National Monument Montezuma Well Unit (MOWE)

## 2. Location

street & number 5525 Beaver Creek Road  not for publication  
city or town Rimrock  vicinity  
state Arizona code AZ county Yavapai code 025 zip code 86335

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,  
I hereby certify that this    nomination    request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

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

   national    statewide  local

Robert A. Motta Deputy FPO December 18, 2012  
Signature of certifying official Title Date  
National Park Service  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

James W. Garrison 18 JULY 2012  
Signature of commenting official Date

AZ STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER / ARIZONA STATE PARKS  
Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

Name of Property \_\_\_\_\_

County and State \_\_\_\_\_

**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:) **Additional Documentation Approved**

*Ethan K. Beall*  
Signature of the Keeper

*1-29-13*  
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

Back Ranch Historic District  
 Name of Property

Yavapai, AZ  
 County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
 (Check as many boxes as apply.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

**Category of Property**  
 (Check only one box.)

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
0	6	buildings
0		sites
0		structures
		objects
0	6	<b>Total</b>

**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**

8

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

- DOMESTIC / single dwelling
- AGRICULTURE / SUBSISTENCE:
  - Agricultural Field
  - Irrigation Facility
  - Animal Facility
  - Storage
- RECREATION/CULTURE/picnic area/campground

**Current Functions**  
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

- RECREATION/CULTURE
- VACANT/NOT IN USE

Back Ranch Historic District  
Name of Property

Yavapai, AZ  
County and State

## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY  
AMERICAN MOVEMENTS/Residence –  
Bungalow/Craftsman

OTHER / vernacular

### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: STONE / limestone

walls: STONE / cobblestone

WOOD / board and log

roof: WOOD / shingle and metal

other:

### Narrative Description

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

#### Narrative – Summary Paragraph

The Back Ranch Historic District includes eight contributing resources: 1) the Montezuma Well irrigation ditch (partially along prehistoric ditch ways), 2) the Island Ditch and Flume remnants, 3) the foundation of the 1895 house, 4) the ca. 1895 log smoke house, 5) the c. 1895 pig pens and dry storage area (located within prehistoric cave dwellings), 6) the 1930 residence, 7) the picnic area, and 8) pastures and fields. The district consists of approximately 205 acres, including contributing historic field and pasture land, the irrigation ditch system within them, and grazing lands. Besides these contributing elements there are clusters of artifacts at the site of the c. 1895 barn and barnyard near the house and at the site of a house in the southwest portion of the district, which was also used as the first Rimrock post office and as a school. Though these latter two sites with their artifact clusters are non-contributing to the district their loss does not detract from the overall Back Ranch Historic District.

The district is within the Montezuma Well unit of Montezuma Castle National Monument. The National Park Service has built six buildings for its operations and they are non-contributing: the visitor contact station, the main restroom, the two staff houses, the work shop, and the picnic area restroom. The Back Ranch Historic District has historic integrity in terms of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The broad contextual setting of the once-isolated Back Ranch has changed in the past fifty years and primarily within the past ten years because of construction of a nearby interstate highway and the resultant new residential development abutting the monument's western boundary.

The prehistoric archeological resources within the Montezuma Well unit of Montezuma Castle National Monument were documented and a National Register of Historic Places archeological district listed in November 20, 1978 (NPS NRIS #66000082). Because of its prehistoric significance Montezuma Well was established as a unit of the National Park Service in 1947, after the Federal acquisition of the Back Ranch lands. The 205 acres of the Back Ranch Historic District is contained within the 285 acres of the Montezuma Well archeological district and therefore administratively listed in the National Register, but, except for the re-used prehistoric irrigation network and cave dwelling, it has distinctly different resources. In a March 2006 concurrence with the Arizona State Historic Preservation Office, the Back Ranch historic ditches and the historic ditches that re-use the prehistoric ditches were determined eligible to the National Register of Historic Places, and are further detailed here.

#### Setting

The Back Ranch Historic District is an "L" shaped parcel located in Section 31, Township 15 North and Range 6 East, and in Section 36, Township 15 North and Range 5 East, Gila and Salt River Baseline and Meridian (G&SRBM), in eastern Yavapai County. The Back Ranch Historic District is accessible from Interstate 17 via Exit 293 (the McGuireville Exit), then following Beaver Creek Road four miles east until the pavement's ends at the entrance road of Montezuma Well National Monument. The Back Ranch land is steep on the north along the rimrock, then drops to the south to the broad bottomlands along the Wet Beaver Creek, a tributary of the Verde River. The Verde River Valley region is notable for its diverse life zones which range from Desert Grasslands to Ponderosa Pine Forest within fifteen miles of the Verde River

Back Ranch Historic District

Yavapai, AZ

Name of Property

County and State

Zone. At Back Ranch, except where touched by irrigation waters, the landscape is semi-arid with prickly pear cactus, catclaw, creosote bush, gray thorne, yucca, and saltbush predominating. Larger patches of 25' one seed juniper and velvet mesquite identify this as a transition zone between the Sonora Desert and Colorado Plateau. Important historic landscape features include deciduous tree-lines of sycamore, ash and cottonwood along the creek and irrigation ditches; the grass-covered and sycamore and cottonwood tree-shaded picnic area; irrigated fields and pasture lands; native gramma grass grazing land; and a long-abandoned melon and fruit crop field. Beaver Creek Road across the district follows its historic corridor along the stream and through the one-time farm and ranch lands along it, from the Verde River valley to the base of the rugged Mogollon Rim.

The Back Ranch Historic District is located within Arizona's physiographic Transition Zone. Cutting diagonally 400 miles across Arizona, the Transition Zone is a rugged country with deep canyons and high mountain ranges that connects the Sonoran Desert at 1,000 feet elevation on the south with the pine tree-covered Mogollon Rim and Colorado Plateau at 7,000 feet on the north. Geologically the area is composed of Verde Formation, a lacustrine or fresh-water limestone characterized by soft and hard layers which erode into flat benches or mesas with a thick exposed vertical edge, locally called rimrock. Fifteen miles north of the Back Ranch within this formation is the spectacular Red Rock Country of Oak Creek around Sedona, Arizona. Flowing through the middle of the Transition Zone in central Arizona is the 150 mile long Verde River, one of Arizona's few never-drying streams. At 3,700 feet the Back Ranch sits along Wet Beaver Creek, one of the four or five tributaries that feed the Verde River in the Verde Valley. The site includes the Montezuma Well, a natural spring fed water body that provides irrigation water through its outlet.

The significant natural resource of "Montezuma Well" is located in a travertine (re-deposited limestone) spring mound, roughly 135' deep and 470' across. The surprising-to-behold Montezuma Well sink hole was formed by the collapse of a cavern eroded out of limestone by the Well's source of water, several warm springs in the bottom of the pool which maintains a constant temperature of 76 degrees. The Montezuma Well pool holds about 5,000,000 gallons of water. Springs in the bottom keep the pool at a constant average depth of 55 feet, and a small 150-foot cave (or swallet) at pond level allows the water to drain out at 1100 gallons per minute. This subterranean flow empties south of the Well into a ditch, the constant waters providing a source for irrigating fields from prehistoric to modern times, including those of Back Ranch Historic District. Along the Montezuma Well walls and at its edge are prehistoric dwellings. The Well and ruins retain graffiti and evidence of late nineteenth and early twentieth century use as a tourist attraction.

### **Spatial Organization**

The spatial organization of Back's Ranch is linear along the Wet Beaver Creek, from the Montezuma Well Ditch head west for over a mile. The Montezuma Well Ditch is distinctively lined with cottonwoods and sycamore across the district, from its head to the end of the property at Schoolhouse Wash. The ditch is described under contributing resources.

The Montezuma Well Ditch divides the developed areas from the open grazing areas. The primary cluster of buildings are situated above the high-water line and adjacent the main Montezuma Well Ditch and fields. The cluster includes the single dwelling bungalow, smokehouse, 1895 house site, barn and barnyard site, and the four non-contributing NPS structures and infrastructure described below. The buildings were aligned to the ranch road, which spurred off the Beaver Creek Road. The ranch road in front of the house, barn, barnyard, and smokehouse is no longer used and is over-grown. Part of the ranch road is now part of the picnic area parking lot, which is paved. Nearby, the tree-shaded picnic area includes lateral ditches off the Montezuma Well ditch, which flow into the picnic area and to fields beyond.

All of the various use areas were linked by the Beaver Creek Road that ran somewhat parallel with the creek and connected Camp Verde, ten miles distant, and the string of former farmlands and ranches along the creek. Initially a part of the Chaves Trail, ca. 1864, then the stage road, post 1870, it was upgraded to a dirt highway ca. 1912. The Beaver Creek Road, although it follows the route of historic roads, does not retain the historic features of the earlier roads, and is not a contributing resource. The paved road to the NPS contact station and parking lot at the Montezuma Well, and the NPS paved spur road to the housing area are also non-contributing. A short stretch of the nineteenth century wagon road converted to a dirt state highway after 1912 remains, and is the entrance road to the picnic area, off the Montezuma Well entrance road. The narrow paved few hundred feet of original highway passes in front of the park's prehistoric ditch exhibit, where a short section of Sinagua ditch is revealed. This site is also associated with the Backs's development of the Montezuma Well as an attraction for travelers along the highway. These prehistoric ditch remnants and the short road segment are contributing features of the district.

Back Ranch Historic District  
Name of Property

Yavapai, AZ  
County and State

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**Contributing Resources:**

**Back, William L. and Mae (Cox), Residence**

The William Lester and Mae (Cox) Back c. 1930 House features a low pitched roof with front facing gable, wide overhanging eaves with exposed rafter tails, horizontal lap siding, paired double hung windows in the living room and a distinctive front porch enclosed by a low cobblestone wall with raised stone footings supporting four tapered columns which supported the distinctive hip roof. Although the hip roof, stone bases and tapered columns of the front porch are no longer extant, the remainder of the building has the original appearance, setting, and features as built and the historic integrity is intact.

The Back Residence is set in an open glade just east of Beaver Creek Road and northeast of the Montezuma Well Picnic Area. This building represents the earliest late 19th and early 20th Century American Movement Bungalow in the vicinity. The 24' x 28' single-story, two-bedroom ranch house utilizes basalt and red sandstone cobbles in the foundation, 2x4 framing, clear clapboard siding, clear 1x4 trim, factory glazed one over one, double-hung windows with period detachable screens, exposed 2x4 plumb-cut rafters and a simple gable roof. The building includes a 6' x 20' entry porch surrounded by a rough cobble wall, which provides footings for the columns supporting the porch roof. The building has a poured back stoop roughly five feet wide by four feet deep, with two poured concrete steps leading down onto an 18' x 18' flagstone patio. The building faces north-northwest with the entry door just left of center. With the exception of rebuilding the front porch roof following the 1947 acquisition by the Park Service, the building today appears much the same way it did seventy years ago.

The Bungalow or Craftsman style was inspired by the English Arts and Crafts movement, which brought a renewed interest in hand-crafted materials and harmony with the natural environment. One of the early proponents of the Arts and Crafts movement was William Morris, a utopian English socialist and designer of the Morris chair. As the Arts and Crafts Movement spread to the United States, the style became a signature of the Stickley brothers. In 1898 Gustav Stickley (1858-1942) founded a design company, Craftsman Workshops, with his brother Leopold Stickley in upstate Eastwood, New York. Locally, the notions of the American Craftsman became known via Charles Whittlesey, the Chief Architect for the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe railways, and who designed Riordan Mansion in Flagstaff in 1904 and the 1905 El Tovar Lodge at Grand Canyon. The Craftsman Bungalow became popular across Arizona in the teens, with many regional examples built in Flagstaff, Prescott, Jerome, Cottonwood and especially the 1910s nearby company town of Clarkdale. William Lester and his wife Mae were exposed to buildings such as this in the developing 1920s railroad town of Winslow, where the family lived immediately before returning home to the Back Ranch following the death of William Lester's father, William Beriman Back. William Lester built this home on the ashes of the home he was born in, which had burned to the ground in February of 1929. See Historic Photos of the Back Ranch Historic District - Figures 13 and 14; Historic American Building Survey Resources - Figures 20 and 21; and photos - AZ-Yavapai County Back Ranch Historic District numbers 0001 - 0004 and 0007.

**Back, William Beriman and Margie (Dickinson) Smokehouse**

The William Beriman and Margie (Dickinson) Back c. 1895 log smokehouse, a secondary structure, was used for the preservation of ham, bacon and other meats, and stands today as among the oldest preserved log structures in the Verde Valley. The smokehouse is a 14' x 16' hewn log structure with straight half lap notched corners, mud chinking, and a solid log ceiling supported mid-span by a log joist, which in turn is supported in the middle by a single log post. The structure is roofed with a conventional rough-sawn 2x4 frame rafter system with 1x4 spaced sheathing and covered with corrugated roofing. Access is gained through a single low door and there are no other openings. The dark interior of the building is blackened from the smoking process, and the exterior logs still retain some mud chinking. The logs used in construction are mostly Arizona Alder with some juniper or Arizona Cypress. This structure is a remnant of a building complex including a house, barn and various appurtenant buildings that either burned in early 1929 or were subsequently removed during the Park Service era (1947 to the present). The smokehouse dates from c. 1895 following the arrival of Bill and Margie Back and appears almost exactly as it did one-hundred years ago, with the exception of termite holes and the loss of some chinking. See Historic Photos of the Back Ranch Historic District, Figures 14 and 17; Historic American Building Survey Resources - Figure 22; and photos - AZ-Yavapai County Back Ranch Historic District numbers 0005 - 0008.

Back Ranch Historic District

Yavapai, AZ

Name of Property

County and State

### **Montezuma Well Ditch**

This Agricultural/Subsistence irrigation facility is a functioning, open, unlined irrigation ditch that carries water from Montezuma Well to the picnic ground, fields and water-users below the National Monument. The main canal can be traced from the water source to more than 2400 meters away. The first approximately six-tenths mile of the c. 1888 Montezuma Well Ditch follows a prehistoric Hohokam/Sinagua alignment beginning on the creek side of the Montezuma Well swallet. It diverges from the prehistoric ditch just above the smokehouse and then follows around the picnic area approximately an additional four-tenths of a mile to the boundary of the district. The facility consists of the ditch and remnants of the historic distribution system including headgates that feed smaller ditches used to irrigate individual fields and the picnic area. Along the way, two or perhaps three distribution canals diverged from the main canal. These canals would have carried water to the lateral canals that are no longer apparent at Montezuma Well, the only real part of the canal network missing. The excellent preservation of the canals provided by the travertine lining provides for an exceptional opportunity for further research and study of this type of irrigation system. This structure is in virtually the same shape, dimensions and configuration as it has been for the last one-hundred years. See Historic Photos of the Back Ranch Historic District, Figures 8 and 12; Additional Resources Figure 25; and photos - AZ-Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District numbers 0009 – 0011 and 0015.

### **The Island Ditch and Flume**

This Agricultural/Subsistence irrigation facility includes the remains of an approximately one-quarter mile long ditch originally fed by a 100-foot-long flume which came off the Montezuma Well Ditch. This structure provided irrigation to a garden area where watermelons and other garden produce were grown historically. The rusted remains of the flume and the depression marking the channel of the ditch are easily recognizable. The fields are still open and recognizable but mesquite trees have begun to invade the clearings after over eighty years of abandonment. This facility was built by William Beriman Back in approximately the 1910s. See Additional Resources, Figure 25 and photos - AZ -Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District numbers 0012 – 0013.

### **Montezuma Well Picnic Area**

This Recreation/Culture Site consists of approximately five acres located just southwest of the Back House. The picnic area is irrigated by the Montezuma Well Ditch and is shaded by large cottonwood and juniper trees. This was at one time the site of a campground where visitors could stay while visiting Montezuma Well, Montezuma Castle, Oak Creek, Soda Springs or traveling along the road from the Verde Valley to Stoneman Lake, Mormon Lake and Flagstaff. It is also the site of the reunions of the Verde Valley Pioneers. Today the Montezuma Well Picnic Area is served by a restroom, water fountain, and picnic tables and is maintained by the National Park Service. Many of the trees are the same and the area appears much the same as it has for the last one-hundred years. See Historic Photos of the Back Ranch Historic District, Figures 9, 10 and 15; and photos - AZ-Yavapai County Back Ranch Historic District numbers 0014 – 0015.

### **Back Ranch Farmland, Pasture and Fields**

There are approximately eighty acres of c. 1870 – 1947 Agricultural/Subsistence/Agricultural Fields and Pasture at Montezuma Well's Back Ranch Historic District. The fields run from just south of the current residence area to the western boundary of the monument. William Back had built a barbed wire fence around the approximately eighty acres, evidence of which is still visible along the West Beaver Creek. The area generally served as pasture in the last years the Back family owned it and in the early years of the Park Service administration. The fields have not been cultivated in approximately fifty years and Native vegetation, such as mesquite, yucca, and winterfat, are beginning to revegetate the once open farmland. In collaboration with the Hopi tribe, a one acre demonstration garden has been introduced using plants once traditionally used by the regions' Native Americans. See Historic Photos of the Back Ranch Historic District, Figures 3 and 4 and photos AZ-Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District numbers 0016 – 0018.

### **Hog Pen / Storage Area site**

There are two large Agricultural/Subsistence/Storage alcoves under an overhanging cliff immediately northeast of the smokehouse and Montezuma Well Ditch. This large, flat work area is protected from rain and afforded a partial enclosure and shelter in inclement weather for domestic hogs, which were raised by the Back family between c. 1895 to 1940. This site includes remains of stone walls and wire used to keep hogs penned before being slaughtered and processed in the

Back Ranch Historic District  
Name of Property

Yavapai, AZ  
County and State

smokehouse. This area also served as a dry storage place as many metal wagon, implement, and harness parts have survived the years. Archeological evidence of the site as a Sinagua cave dwelling was documented in archeologist Susan Well's study referenced in the bibliography. See photos AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District numbers 0019 – 0021.

### **Back, William Beriman Residence – Foundation**

Adjacent to and immediately west of the William L. Back house is an approximately sixty-foot long foundation remnant of the original 1895 William B. Back home. This includes a poured concrete stem which carried the weight of the building and large rocks positioned to carry the weight of the surrounding porch. The building this foundation supported burned to the ground in February of 1929 but the footing, including two original corner alignments, survives. This site likely represents the earliest use of poured concrete in the Beaver Creek vicinity. See Historic Photos of the Back Ranch Historic District, Figure 6, 7 and 12, and photos AZ–Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District numbers 0007 and 0022 – 0023.

### **Non-contributing Resources**

#### **Barn and Barnyard site**

During the 1888-1947 occupation of the ranch several functional buildings stood west of the 1895 Back home. These are listed in the 1906 homestead application as barn 16 x 80, with sheds; granary 10x 8; chicken coop 12x 12; corn crib 10x12; and privy. Within a decade of acquisition by the National Park Service these service buildings were removed by the National Park Service. These structures no longer stand. The new road construction and NPS bathroom in the picnic area have disturbed the site and remnant artifact clusters. Therefore the site lacks integrity, but their loss does not detract from the overall integrity of the district.

#### **Rimrock Post Office site**

The archeological cluster at this site are located approximately one half mile southwest of the main house and barn area near the southwest border of the fields and of the district. The original two-story building approximately 30 x 50 was a simple gable roof board and batten structure. The remnant bricks from a brick chimney on the site indicate its location. Artifacts in the area may be able to add to our understating of its occupation and use, especially as the first Rimrock post office and, briefly, as the 1930s school house, but disturbance of the area by farming and by flooding of this the lowest area of the ranch has impacted the integrity of the site and artifact clusters. The loss of the structure and site integrity, however, does not detract from the overall integrity of the historic district.

**Visitor Contact Station / Ranger Headquarters** – This building, built in 1998, is located adjacent to the Main Parking Lot at the trailhead leading to Montezuma Well. See photos - AZ–Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0024.

**Main Bathroom** – This building, built in 1999, serves as the main bathroom for visitors to Montezuma Well. It is adjacent to the end of the Montezuma Well Trail and next to the main parking lot. See photo - AZ–Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0025.

**Picnic Area Bathroom** – The Picnic Area Bathroom is a brick building adjacent to the Picnic Area. This building was built in 2004. See photo - AZ–Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0026.

**Residential Housing Area** – The housing area is located immediately west of the Maintenance/Workshop Complex and includes two Mission 66 Residences built in 1957-58 which provide housing for permanent and temporary staff. See photo - AZ–Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0027.

**Maintenance / Workshop Complex** – This complex and the housing area are located along a limited access road immediately west of the William L. Back House. This brick building was built in 2009. This area also includes two carports that provide covered storage for equipment and resident vehicles. This complex includes a brick well-house enclosing the domestic well which provides water to the residences and bathrooms. See photo - AZ–Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0028.

Back Ranch Historic District  
Name of Property

Yavapai, AZ  
County and State

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

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

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

**Criteria Considerations**

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

Property is:

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

**Period of Significance (justification)**

The period of significance extends from 1870 with the first Euro-American settlement to the 1947 acquisition of the Back Ranch by the National Park Service.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

- EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT
- AGRICULTURE
- SOCIAL HISTORY
- ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

**Period of Significance**

1870 - 1947

**Significant Dates**

1870, 1888, 1895, 1930, 1947

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Wales Arnold, William Back

Back Ranch Historic District

Yavapai, AZ

Name of Property

County and State

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

The Back Ranch Historic District is located along Wet Beaver Creek in the Verde Valley, Yavapai County, Arizona. The district includes eight contributing resources on 205 acres within the Montezuma Well unit of Montezuma Castle National Monument, including a residence, outbuildings, irrigation system, building sites, and pastures or fields. The structures are in their original location and the fields continue in use, in part, as picnic grounds and demonstration garden. The property is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places at the local level of significance under Criterion A as a rare intact representative ranch land associated with late nineteenth century settlement of the once isolated region. The Back Ranch Historic District is a significant example of small ranch operations as defined by the Multiple Property Documentation Form, "Cattle Ranching in Arizona, 1540-1950," prepared by William S. Collins of the Arizona State Historic Preservation Office.<sup>1</sup> Also, the Back Ranch is an example of and product of the dissemination of the Ohio Valley/Midwest social traditions and culture into Arizona, in sharp contrast to the Mormon farm/ranch and Texas rangelands cultures expanding into Arizona during the same period, 1860s-1890s. Finally, before his death in 1929, William Back and his family also developed the Montezuma Well as a recreational and tourist destination, one of the first in the state. The Back heirs continued to expand the tourist operation until 1947 when they sold the Back Ranch and its Montezuma Well to the National Park Service.

The Back Ranch Historic District is also eligible under Criterion C for the adaption of prehistoric irrigation ditches, fields, and cave dwellings into an American period ranch. Although not the first Arizonans to clear the debris and silt from prehistoric irrigation ditches, the 1870 clearing by Wales Arnold of the Sinagua fields and ditch, and their expansion by William B. Back after 1888, and the continued use of components of the irrigation system today makes it one of the longest continually in operation. The re-use of prehistoric cave dwellings into storage areas and pens exemplify the re-use in a broader pattern beyond the fields. The prehistoric ditch system, the Montezuma Well Ditch, and prehistoric cave dwellings were listed on the National Register of Historic Places at the national level of significance November 20, 1978 as part of the Montezuma Castle and Montezuma Well archeological district. The following provides additional information on their re-use during the historic period. The separate historic ditches built by William B. Back are eligible at the local level of significance.

#### **Central Arizona Prehistory and Exploration to 1864**

During the 1100s-1400s in the Verde Valley, Sinagua farmers built irrigation systems and dwellings of striking magnificence. Above Beaver Creek are the cliff dwellings of the misnamed Montezuma Castle and prehistoric dwellings and irrigation systems at Montezuma Well. Modern Hopi oral traditions connect these Sinagua sites with the Pueblos of northeast Arizona, and have identified a corridor of travel between them. By the time of the arrival of Europeans, who followed these corridors, many of the Sinagua sites were in ruins. The first written descriptions of the central Arizona region are by Spanish conquistadores Antonio de Espejo (1583), Marcos Farfán de los Godos (1598), and Juan de Oñate (1606). They also met the ancestors of the modern Yavapai and Apache. In the Verde Valley Espejo's expedition may have met Yavapai in the riparian area along Wet Beaver Creek and at Montezuma Well. The Yavapai occupied much of central Arizona, especially the bountiful Verde Valley, where they subsisted, hunted, and reaped its food sources.<sup>2</sup>

Though Iberian ranching traditions and settlement took root in southern Arizona at this time, and *entradas* and missionary conversion occurred in Northeast Arizona, the Spanish and later Republic of Mexico did not colonize the region north of the Gila River in central Arizona. During the Mexican era, fur trappers ventured briefly up the Verde River while overland travelers from Mexican Santa Fe blazed a trail connecting New Mexico and California via the San Francisco Peaks to the north of the Verde Valley. Weary travelers along this route of the Old Spanish Trail may have lingered at the lush grasslands of the upper Verde River drainage, in Chino Valley, but continued on to California. With the United States acquisition of the area in 1848, and following the California gold discovery, travel increased across northern Arizona, especially by New Mexico sheep herds and immigrants bound for California. After 1854 they followed along the Beale Wagon Road, a military road blazed from the settled Rio Grande valley of New Mexico, across Arizona to California.

<sup>1</sup> This nomination is not under this MPD but one of its themes is related to the MPD theme of ranching.

<sup>2</sup> For an overview prehistory of the region see Susan J. Wells and Keith M. Anderson, *Archeological Survey and Architectural Study of Montezuma Castle National Monument* (Tucson: National Park Service, 1988), and for an overview regional history see William L. Cowan, *Images of America, Verde Valley* (Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2011).

Back Ranch Historic District

Yavapai, AZ

Name of Property

County and State

Settlement in central Arizona arrived on the heels of a gold discovery. In 1863, the Joseph R. Walker party of prospectors caused the rush to the goldfields along the Hassayampa River, Lynx Creek, Big Bug, and other streams around Prescott, founded in 1864 as the capital of the new Territory of Arizona. Nearby the military established Fort Whipple. Prospectors ventured out from this core, and fifty miles east in the Verde Valley one party in March 1864 re-discovered and named Montezuma Well:

We arrived at the Verde on the third day, nothing of note happening, except the discovery of a small lake, or more properly speaking, an immense spring, some two-hundred yards in breadth, of circular form. The water was clear, and as blue as the sea. It was very deep, and on one side there flowed out a stream sufficiently large for two sluice heads. This spring is surrounded on three sides by high bluffs, and in these bluffs were caves either natural or cut out, which were walled up in front with doorways and passages from one room to another. They were probably built by the Aztecs. We gave the name of Montezuma to the well.<sup>3</sup>

During the nineteenth century, popular belief held that the Aztecs had built the ruins across the Southwest, and Montezuma's name was given to more than a few. As late as 1915, rancher William B. Back described the Well's features in these terms. In a newspaper interview he said, I "have unearthed a system of irrigating ditches one mile long on the ranch and according to geologists recently from Washington, they must have been constructed and used a thousand years ago... The Aztecs who built this waterway, cleverly performed an engineering duty that could not be improved upon in this modern day."<sup>4</sup>

#### **Cattle Ranching in Central Arizona: Early American Period, 1863-1880**

During 1863-7, a number of these prospectors saw profit in bringing cattle to sell to miners and began spreading out into the few valleys with water or "cienegas" to convert into small farms and ranches. In 1863, William H. Kirkland brought a herd of Sonoran cattle from the Santa Cruz River south of Tucson and settled Kirkland Valley. Abraham Peeples, former miner, returned to start a farm and ranch at Peeples Valley. The Miller brothers, James and Jacob, part of the original Walker party, brought in a herd from California to Miller Valley. James Baker and Robert Postle brought Texas cattle to the vast gramma grass plain of Chino Valley. King S. Woolsey from southern Arizona started the Woolsey ranch and farm east of Prescott on the Agua Fria River, midway between Prescott and the Verde Valley (the Woolsey Ranchhouse Ruin is listed on the National Register of Historic Places). In 1865, Euro-American settlers moved into the Verde Valley.

Many other stock raisers and farmers brought in herds of 100 to 500 via southern Arizona, California, and New Mexico. The Verde Valley became a small but prosperous farm and ranch area protected by the military post at the junction of the Verde River and Beaver Creek, Camp Lincoln later named Camp Verde. Besides the supplying of mining camps, the increase in troops into Arizona, especially the string of forts commanded by Ft. Whipple, brought another market, which at first demanded 3,000 beef a year. In June 1867, the *Prescott Arizona Miner* reviewed "Ranching in Central Arizona" and its beginnings. The biggest operation was Bowers & Brother, Ft. Whipple post sutlers, Prescott merchants, and recent owners of the Woolsey Ranch, with its herd of 800. Nathan Bowers, New Hampshire businessman and 49er built up the Woolsey Ranch (renamed Bowers Ranch), received the first patented homestead in the territory, had a long career helping other ranchers get a start, was a founder of the Yavapai Cattlemen's Association, and later served on the territory's Live Stock Sanitary Commission.

Ranching in central Arizona during the 1860s and 1870s was small-scale, with stock raisers supplying the local military posts and Indian reservations. The 1870s discovery of silver mines south of Prescott opened additional mining camp markets. The largest export was cattle hides, sent to California from the local butchers, most of whom were also stock raisers. This was a period well-known for conflict with Native American groups, the Indian Wars, culminating in the removal of Yavapai, Apache and other tribes from their homelands to distant reservations. With removal came increased Euro-American settlement, stimulated by favorable homestead laws.

<sup>3</sup> *Arizona Miner* (Prescott), May 25, 1864 quoted in Josh Protas, *A Past Preserved in Stone: A History of Montezuma Castle National Monument* (Tucson: Western National Parks Association, 2002), p. 25.

<sup>4</sup> *Tucson Daily Citizen* January 22, 1915.

Back Ranch Historic District

Yavapai, AZ

Name of Property

County and State

## Wales Arnold

During the 1860s, one of the hands working for Nathan Bowers was Wales Arnold, the first settler on what would become the Back Ranch. Arnold was the first to re-use the waters of Beaver Creek and Montezuma Well, and begin clearing the fields once used by the Sinagua. Arnold's adobe home, though west of the Back Ranch Historic District and long ago melted into the landscape, is not included in this nomination, but his use of Montezuma Well, and development of the initial irrigation system and fields are significant parts of the ranch history.

A Yankee born in 1837 in Braintree, Massachusetts, he was mining at Whiskey Diggings in the California Sierra Nevada when the Civil War broke out. He joined Company F of the First California Infantry (California Volunteers), and in the fall of 1863 his unit was dispatched to establish Fort Whipple. When Wales mustered out of the service in August of 1864, he prospected along Lynx Creek for a time before coming into the Verde Valley. In 1868 Arnold entered into a partnership with George D. Bowers, Nathan Bower's nephew, to operate the sutler's store at Camp Verde, where it had been established along the high point between Beaver Creek and the Verde River. He also married Sarah Jennie Wells, cook at the Bowers ranch. Arnold spent two years building an irrigation ditch and farm, and running the Camp Verde store.

In the summer of 1870, Arnold moved ten miles away to begin clearing and settling the former Sinagua fields below Montezuma Well, the future Back Ranch site. In 1870, the military had upgraded the trail between Prescott and Santa Fe through the Verde Valley into a wagon road, the most difficult section being up a 3,000 foot elevation climb to the Mogollon Rim. With the opening of the road, which passed by Montezuma Well, Wales and Jennie Arnold staked a homestead claim and water right to Montezuma Well, built and operated Arnold's Station, a way stop and mail transfer point. When the mail riders had problems or were waylaid along the route, Arnold carried the local mail either from Arnold Station to Camp Verde, then the fifty miles west to Prescott or east the eighty miles from Camp Verde to Sunset Crossing (near modern Winslow) on the Little Colorado River. The Arnolds' station was described as an adobe fortress with gun port holes for protection (Arnold's partner George Bowers and neighbor Joe Burroughs had been killed by Apache). According to one account, Jennie Arnold "washed her dishes and fed her chickens with a gun always in reach."<sup>5</sup>

Arnold wasn't the first to observe that by clearing ancient Indian canals of debris and silt, they could support crops again (best known was contemporary efforts of re-using Hohokam canals at what would become Phoenix, Arizona). During 1870-1, probably using skills learned in building mining sluices and ditches, Arnold diverted water from Wet Beaver Creek (and Montezuma Well outlet) and irrigated 30 acres of bottom land (the former Sinagua fields) for the horse herds and mules needed by the express riders, freight wagons and stage lines. An early description of the Arnold's station and ranch was published in the Prescott *Weekly Arizona Miner*, April 26, 1873:

The ranch of Mr. Arnold is one of the best and prettiest in Arizona. Barley, alfalfa, vegetables, etc. were growing finely. Mr. and Mrs. Arnold gave us a welcome reception and a treat in the shape of a boat ride on Beaver Creek. Some of the grandest scenery in America is to be seen on Beaver Creek, and it will, no doubt, attract many tourists as soon as the 35<sup>th</sup> parallel railroad is completed.

The station was a multi-cultural outpost. Hispanics from New Mexico and Mexico worked as wood cutters and teamsters, young men recently arriving from the States worked as mail carriers and express riders, and military officers from the posts visited the ranch and the adjacent attraction of Montezuma Well (some of the first published, detailed descriptions are by army officers). Julian Lopez, a California vaquero, was the all-around hand. Sometime in the early 1870s, a Yavapai child was brought to the Arnolds. According to one source, the child had been found hiding in a cave after the army had attacked a *rancheria*. The Arnolds raised her as their own, Lulu Verde Arnold, born ca. 1869.

Besides horses for the freight and stage companies, Arnold also kept and grazed cattle on the surrounding public domain and on his pastures at the "Montezuma Well Ranch." When Arnold arrived at the Well there was an unwritten law of the range, described by range historian Bert Haskett, "that he who first watered his stock in a stream, spring, or water hole had prior and exclusive rights to its use thereafter."<sup>6</sup> This included the surrounding common range lands. Arnold never patented his homestead (it was patented after he sold it) avoiding the need to define his claim's boundary line. His former partners, the Bowers brothers, were government contractors who bought the first large herds of Texas cattle brought into

<sup>5</sup> D. L. Robinson, "Biographies of Early Settlers," in Verde Valley Pioneers Association, *Pioneer Stories of Arizona's Verde Valley* (Camp Verde: Verde Valley Pioneer's Association, 1954), p. 19.

<sup>6</sup> Bert Haskett, "Early History of the Cattle Industry in Arizona," *Arizona Historical Review*, vol VI, No. 4 (October 1935), pp. 3-42.

Back Ranch Historic District

Yavapai, AZ

Name of Property

County and State

the valley. Arnold bought Texas cattle for the seed of his herd. Trailed from Texas, up the Pecos and across northern New Mexico and Arizona the drovers followed the wagon route from Sunset Crossing of the Little Colorado River to the southwest across and down the Mogollon Rim and into the Verde Valley via the Beaver Creek drainage. These cattle were supplemented by shorthorns, a variety of British breeds brought to the Americas, herded into the far West from the Midwest. Arnold and his few neighbors learned that the Verde Valley and the adjacent Mogollon Rim country proved a perfect winter and summer grazing region for cattle.

In 1871, Arnold lost his horse herd to Apache or Yavapai raiders. Nearby, travelers were killed, and express riders killed or wounded. Tensions caused by the introduction of cattle and the expanding mining operations brought war against the Yavapai and Tonto Apache. Late in 1872, General George Crook was ordered to winter campaigns against Native American groups, and during 1872-4 his troops crushed their defenses. An 1871 order to create a reservation in the Verde Valley for the Yavapai was revoked April 23, 1875. That spring the Yavapai on the reservation followed their own Trail of Tears from their homeland in the Verde Valley to the San Carlos reservation to the east. Skirmishes would continue until 1882, the date of the last battle in the Verde region.

The removal of the Yavapai coincided with the increased immigration into Arizona. Arnold's station was on the main road from the east into central Arizona – the wagon road down the rim and east from New Mexico was an extension of the old Santa Fe Trail from the states. Grasshopper plagues and harsh winters in Kansas and elsewhere in the Midwest brought caravans of covered wagons starting in the mid-1870s into the Verde Valley. They all passed down the road and by Arnold's Station. One 1870s arrival recalled the Verde Valley was "a hunter's and stockman's paradise. Wild game was everywhere and the grass was knee high and plentiful."<sup>7</sup> A few settled nearby, and by 1880 the available watered bottom land had been claimed. In 1878, Wales was elected Justice of the Peace for the expanding population along Beaver Creek District.

During 1876-8, the Santa Fe & Prescott Mail & Express Company rerouted the wagon road, which left Arnold's station off the stage route. He continued to supply horses and other supplies at nearby Beaver Head Station. The stage route was abandoned in late 1881, as the railroad built across northern Arizona. With the coming of new settlers on what Arnold considered his much larger land claim, and with the impending demise of long distance freight and stage lines because of the rapidly approaching railroad (built across Arizona, north and south, 1879-1883), Arnold sold, March 2, 1880, the 160 acre homestead claim to Robert Hornbeck, who had been one of the mail carriers at Arnold Station. After the summer of 1880 in California, Wales, Jennie, and Lulu Verde Arnold, and Julian Lopez moved to a ranch south of Camp Verde, beneath Squaw Peak in the Black Hills. With them passed the Early American Period along Beaver Creek. The Arnolds cared for Julian Lopez until he died of old age. Lulu Verde married a prospector, Abraham McKesson working the Wire Gold claim nearby, and bore him three children before she died of tuberculosis, not yet 30 years old. Wales and Jennie retired to Camp Verde to become venerated pioneers by the time of their deaths, Jennie in 1909, and Wales in 1913.

### Background of Ohio Valley/Midwest Traditions in the Verde Valley

By the time Wales Arnold sold the ranch, rural central Arizona was undergoing a fundamental change of population. Wagon trains of settlers out of the Midwest, Missouri, and Arkansas, and the Ohio River valley filled in the valleys of central Arizona. They brought a tradition of small farms with grazing of small herds on common pastures that evolved in central Arizona's Chino Valley, Verde Valley, Tonto Basin, and Pleasant Valley into a country of small homesteads or ranches. In his classic account of *The North American Cattle Ranching Frontier*, Terry Jordan recounts the migration of this British rooted system from Appalachia to the Ohio Valley and Missouri, and into the far West, including the Verde Valley. Of the Midwestern system, Jordan wrote, "they provided winter feed for the animals; strove to upgrade bloodlines of their herds through selective breeding...; shifted livestock seasonally between different pastures, often so profoundly as to involve transhumance; early formed stockraisers' associations; possessed rather minimal equestrian skills;...erected, at their early convenience, pasture fences; derived some milk and butter from their herds..." Few "cattle kings" rose among these Midwestern producers.<sup>8</sup> The Verde Valley was part of Arizona's one major area of seasonal cattle transhumance, where herds summered in the high meadows of the Rim Country and wintered in the valleys below. Settlers out of the Missouri, Arkansas, and Ohio Valley cattle regions migrated to the few flowing streams of central Arizona.

<sup>7</sup> "Charles Douglas Willard," *Pioneer Stories*, p. 150.

<sup>8</sup> Terry Jordan, *North American Cattle-Ranching Frontiers, Origins, Diffusion, and Differentiation* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1993), pp. 26267-269.

Back Ranch Historic District

Yavapai, AZ

Name of Property

County and State

During the 1870s, in the Verde Valley, along Beaver Creek, Oak Creek, and Clear Creek and in the Middle Verde, wagon trains of settlers had arrived within extended family groups, and they proceeded to stake homesteads. Within a decade of the Yavapai removal small ranches filled in Beaver and other creeks from the Verde River to the base of the Mogollon Rim. For example, in 1875 the Bristow-Dickinson-Hutchinson wagon train left the cattle lands of the Springfield Plain of Missouri, with its small herd of Durham cattle, and carried not just new settlers into the Verde Valley, but the Midwest ranching tradition based on ancient British laws of the common. They would create farmsteads along the streams, from mouth to the uplands, and set out small herds on the surrounding public domain – or commons – between the creeks and river. At first, children tended the herds during the day, and moved them into pens at night. The settlers intermarried with women, wives, mothers, daughters, and sisters, bringing social traditions, education demands, and kith and kin connections. They came west via the Santa Fe Trail, out the Beal Wagon Road and down the cutoff to the Verde Valley, all passing by Arnold's Place. Wales and Jennie Arnold assisted the settlement of Beaver Creek and became part of the important flow of settlement into the region during its first years of trial. Up and down Oak, Beaver, and Clear Creek, Bristows, Dickinsons, Hutchinsons and others rooted in the small ranch tradition staked land claims adjacent to one another.

The Homestead Act of 1862 provided 160 acres to each settler willing to meet its minimal requirements. Historian Gilbert Fite has equated this western migration as an important part of nation-building as well as building the social fabric of the West. He wrote, "The acquisition of land provided an improved social status and an enhanced self-image. With land one could be independent, self-supporting, proud, hopeful of the future, and as good as anyone."<sup>9</sup> In the Verde Valley a new community, interconnected with the old, was transplanted to central Arizona. Women were important to the social network, the raising of families, the putting down of roots, and the health and welfare of the community, including education. Large families were the norm, a reflection of the need for farm labor. In addition to the children providing labor, wives were partners in the ranches where they worked the fields beside their husbands. They also brought in needed cash from butter and eggs sold to the military post, miners, or towns. Among this group of 1870s-1880s settlers were young women later important in the Back Ranch history. Charlotte Bristow Hornbeck, Amanda Hutchinson Mehrens, and Margorie Dickinson Back all arrived as children on the Bristow-Dickinson-Hutchinson wagon train – and later all became owners of the Arnold Place (Back Ranch).

Small farms, claimed under the 1862 homestead law, prospered along the creeks, while the owners used the surrounding free rangelands – the shared "commons" of the public domain – to run their herds. During the 1870s-early 1880s, the Midwesterners increased the population with their large families, started schools for their children, brought the religious camp meeting tradition, raised alfalfa and corn, eggs and butter, and ran small herds on the surrounding public lands. Historian Terry Jordan adds, "Perhaps ranching is not the best word to describe their system, although they happily accepted that designation in the West."<sup>10</sup> The Back Ranch is rooted in their social traditions.

### **Cattle Ranching in Central Arizona: Boom Period, 1880-1893**

In 1882, the Atlantic & Pacific Railroad reached the new town of Flagstaff, and by 1883 it had reached a connection with the Southern Pacific in California. In central Arizona the transcontinental railroad expanded the market for cattle beyond the local mines and military. As William S. Collins notes, "the Atlantic & Pacific Railroad (now Santa Fe) completely altered the nature of the livestock business. Up to 1882 northern Arizona ranchers were small-scale operators, but as happened in southern Arizona with the Southern Pacific, the new rail line opened up the area to the national market."<sup>11</sup> He adds: "With the advent of the railroads, the Arizona cattle industry entered a new phase of export prosperity. Marketable cattle could be shipped either to Midwestern slaughter centers or to Pacific Coast markets, whichever was more favorable at roundup time."

The Arnold ranch (Back Ranch) went through a series of new owners in the 1880s, in part, because of the increased demand for ranches and range lands. In 1881, barely a year after buying Arnold's ranch, young Robert Hornbeck and Charlotte Bristow Hornbeck sold Arnold's Place to William Gilmore Wingfield and his brother-in-law Robert Pleasant. Late in 1882, less than two years later Wingfield and the heirs of his deceased partner Robert Pleasant (who accidentally shot

<sup>9</sup> Gilbert Fite quote in Allyson Brooks and Steph Jacon, *Homesteading and Agricultural Development Context* (Vermillion, South Dakota: South Dakota State Historical Preservation Center, 1994), p. 8.

<sup>10</sup> Jordan, *Cattle-Ranching Frontiers*, p. 269.

<sup>11</sup> William S. Collins, "Cattle Ranching in Arizona, 1540-1950," Multiple Property Documentation Form, National Register of Historic Places, 2003, p. E 23.

Back Ranch Historic District

Yavapai, AZ

Name of Property

County and State

himself at a dance), were tempted by banker Moses H. Sherman of Phoenix and his partner, stock raiser Henry Mehrens, to sell the Arnold Place. Mehrens & Sherman paid \$2,000 for the Arnold homestead, its 160 acres finally patented November 20, 1882. They also paid \$8,000 for Wingfield's 400 cattle and the One Horseshoe brand. Mehrens & Sherman would operate the ranch during the boom years.

Sherman, a Vermont teacher, had arrived in Prescott in 1874, and through political connections became territorial Superintendent of Public Instruction and then Adjutant General of Arizona Territory, all the while speculating in mines and real estate. He moved to Phoenix, started the Valley Bank backed by Chicago investors, and began investing in larger land and irrigation and stock businesses. He backed Mehrens in a stock ranch in the Chino Valley, which they sold for a substantial profit in the expanding market of 1882. On January 23, 1883, they re-invested the money in the Arnold Place, in what became known as the One Horseshoe Outfit because of their brand. Henry Mehrens, born in Germany in 1839, immigrated to the United States and became a naturalized citizen at Tucson in 1876. He moved to Yavapai County, where the 1880 census found him running the Chino Valley ranch of Mehrens & Sherman. Moving to Beaver Creek, he settled into the Arnold's home, raised alfalfa, cattle and horses, and married neighbor Amanda Hutchinson, from one of the first families in the valley. The Mehrens & Sherman operation began using open rangelands surrounding the ranch at Montezuma Well, and, in summer, up the trail to near Stoneman Lake on the Mogollon Rim.

During the 1880s market boom, they increased their herd as did others in the Verde Valley. *The Arizona Champion*, of Peach Springs, September 5, 1885 described the ranch operations in the Verde Valley and gave the estimate of 7,000 cattle run by the Wet Beaver Creek ranchers. Mehrens & Sherman had increased their herd to one thousand head. Along Wet Beaver Creek, the newspaper reported, other businessmen had backed ranch operations. Upstream from Mehrens, the Brannen brothers of Flagstaff backed fellow Canadian Robert Finnie and ran 400 head. Above him Prescott butcher and former sheriff Joseph Walker and partner Saxton Seth Acker ran 1500 head. To their west, the Marr brothers with merchant William S. Head of Camp Verde ran 3600 head. Booming cattle prices had brought too many cattle into the pasturelands. But Yavapai County boosters declared the land only scarcely used with room for a million cattle. The newspapers, especially William "Bucky" O'Neill's *Hoof and Horn* of Prescott, tracked market prices and helped boost the expanding business. He misguided readers with claims that "fortunes have been made," simply "while he [the stock raiser] sleeps his stock 'multiply and increase' on the public domain, asking nothing of him save an occasional handful of salt." Herds were shipped into the region in increasing amounts; tax records show the increase, from 5,083 in Yavapai County in 1874 to 34,243 in 1882, and 116,286 in 1886.<sup>12</sup>

The Mehrens & Sherman cattle operation was typical of the boom era. They used the Arnold home for their base, while grazing herds of 1,000 to 2,000 in the grasslands of the valley in the winter and in the spring a round-up would move the herd up into the pine-covered flats of the Mogollon Rim country. The round-ups were part of a cooperative effort of ranchers from Ash Fork to Payson, a thousand square miles of free range. Round-up bosses – or more commonly called wagon bosses – organized the cowhands, who came from ranches up and down the valley or along the rim. They represented the numerous small ranch operations and ensured that unbranded calves would be branded for the correct outfit. The Mogollon Rim Stock Association and the Yavapai County Cattleman's Association were organized in the 1880s to find and convict stock thieves and promote their interests. Mehrens served on both. The cowboys of Mehrens & Sherman's ranch were skilled products of the Midwest, Southwest, or home grown. In 1888, the first "cowboy tournament" or rodeo was held in Camp Verde.

These stock operations would ship cattle from Flagstaff rail head or, if waiting for improved prices, or other reasons the cattle would be brought off the volcanic cap of the rim, and down the limestone slopes to the valley again. The operation benefited from the farmlands and alfalfa fields along Wet Beaver Creek and other streams. At this time, barbed wire and improved breeds were introduced.

Major changes were about to cause a disruption to the settlement pattern of central Arizona's small ranches. The major cause for the change was the availability of vast tracts of land, part of the railroad land grant awarded in 1866 by Congress but only available after the transcontinental Atlantic & Pacific railroad was built across Arizona. In 1880, the first big operation entered central Arizona, that of Doctor Edward Perrin of San Francisco. His Perrin Land and Cattle Company bought the Baca grant of nearly 100,000 acres in northeast Yavapai County, followed by the nearby purchase of 250,000 acres from the A & P Railroad land grant located between Williams and Ash Fork. Eventually owning nearly 400,000 acres he shipped in thousands of California cattle to stock his ranges. During the mid to late 1880s, the A & P sold its land grant

<sup>12</sup> William O. O'Neill, *Central Arizona, for Homes, for Health, for Wealth* (Prescott: Hoof and Horn Print, 1887) pp. 72, 78.

Back Ranch Historic District

Yavapai, AZ

Name of Property

County and State

as grazing land to outside investors, eventually disbursing over five million acres. Above the Verde Valley, the Arizona Cattle Company with its 121,000 acres and the Aztec Land and Cattle Company or Hashknife outfit with its railroad land grant land, which "covered 1,059,560 acres," shipped in even more cattle.<sup>13</sup> The railroad land grant lands extended forty miles on each side of the railroad in a checker board pattern of ownership, every other section awarded to the A & P. Thus, an eighty mile swath of land extending from the Verde Valley to the Grand Canyon was partially claimed by the railroad, and now the new ranches. The forty mile wide grant included land down to and including the Montezuma Well. If desired the railroad was allowed to select additional indemnity lands up to fifty miles from the railroad. This expanded grant would have consumed land to the Verde River, which included most of the Verde Valley and Chino Valley agricultural lands. Outcry and resolutions from small ranchers to have Congress declare the 1866 railroad land grant null and void went without effect.

These tensions over the public domain also brought violence. On the ground adjacent the Mehrens & Sherman ranch was Montezuma Well and the intake of their irrigation ditches, as well as part of their alfalfa fields. This land had always been operated as Arnold's, but with the 1882 patented land boundary known, stock raiser Samuel Shull squatted on these unclaimed 160 acres at the Well adjacent Mehrens & Sherman. Shull ranged cattle but did little to develop his claim. He moved his small herd between there and the rim until his death in May 1887, murdered by parties unknown. The only known photograph of Shull is of his shirtless corpse propped up in a pine coffin, and with a bullet wound to the head. During the 1880s, Amanda Mehrens's brothers, murderers of an African American settler above Montezuma Well, were sent to the territorial penitentiary at Yuma. These acts of violence caused by resource competitions were part of what has become known as the Rim Country War, between the large ranchers and small farmers and ranchers, between sheep raisers and cattlemen. According to historian Daniel Herman, "It was a uniquely Western "tragedy of the commons" catalyzed by opportunistic men who flocked to Arizona's Rim Country only to find themselves competing for grazing lands."<sup>14</sup> The best known outbreak was the Pleasant Valley War, of the late 1880s-1890s. Some have suggested that Shull's death was part of the beginning of the War.

Only after the 1890s creation of the national forests along the Mogollon Rim and Verde Valley, and the slowly negotiated transfer of railroad land grant lands back to the public domain there (in exchange for land elsewhere) did the land issue get resolved. Major ranchers gave up these lands in exchange for the ability to consolidate ownership of land filling in the remainder of their checker board railroad land grant. Small ranch operators could more easily move back on the Rim and adjacent Verde Valley lands. The Forest Service permits for grazing allotments gave preference to early users and local residents. As one old time small rancher recalled, "the Forests saved us."

According to oral tradition, a few months before his murder, Shull sold his squatters rights to the Montezuma Well and surrounding homestead to young cowboy Abraham Lincoln "Link" Smith, a half-brother of Robert Hornbeck, and one time resident of the Arnold Place when his half-brother and family resided there. In 1887, Link Smith traded a blue roan horse for Shull's squatter's rights and then within a year, 1888, sold the Montezuma Well land claim to William B. and Margorie Back for a team of horses, doubling his investment, as Smith recalled. Possibly because Margorie Back and Amanda Mehrens had traveled from Missouri to Arizona together as children on the Bristow-Dickinson-Hutchinson train and were raised as neighbors on Oak Creek, their reunion, as mothers with children in tow, helped bring harmony to the creek.

Amanda Mehrens' extended family lived along Beaver Creek and, in 1892, Amanda became postmistress of short-lived Montezuma Post Office. The school house along the creek was also on the Mehrens & Sherman's One Horseshoe ranch. As a result of a fall from his horse, Henry Mehrens died in November 1891. Amanda Mehrens continued to operate the ranch, but the cattle boom of the 1880s was over. The droughts of 1891-2 killed cattle as did the winter blizzards of the 1890s. Over grazing caused scouring floods during cloud bursts, and Beaver Creek lost its lush vegetation and became a flood channel. Dams and irrigation systems were washed out, fields destroyed by erosion. Cosmos Mindeleff, writing about the valley, saw the land materially changed, over grazing caused a high death rate of cattle, "the foothills, once celebrated for luxuriant grass, are now bare."<sup>15</sup> The nation-wide economic crash of 1893 further devastated the industry. Northern Arizona cowboy of the time, Will C. Barnes, later recalled: —"not an acre of the land was left unoccupied...[the land] overstocked until native grasses disappeared." By 1893, he recalled, "the Southwest...saw almost total extinction of

<sup>13</sup> William S. Greever, *Arid Domain, the Santa Fe Railway and Its Western Land Grant* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1954), pp. 46.

<sup>14</sup> Daniel Justin Herman, *Hell on the Range, A Story of Honor, Conscience, and the American West* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), p. 283.

<sup>15</sup> Cosmos Mindeleff, "Aboriginal Remains in the Verde Valley, Arizona," *13<sup>th</sup> Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology* (Washington, D.C.: G. P. O., 1896), pp 179-261.

Back Ranch Historic District

Yavapai, AZ

Name of Property

County and State

the [cattle] industry." On the despoiling and on the Rim Country War he concluded, "one wonders what we were all thinking of and how it was that more lives were not lost."<sup>16</sup>

By 1889, Moses Sherman had moved to Los Angeles, where he made a fortune in real estate and electric railways, but could not sell the Mehrens & Sherman ranch, an economic liability. By 1893, widow Amanda Mehrens had moved with daughter Ida to Prescott, later remarried and was living in California by the 1930s. The Sherman & Mehrens ranch operation limped along during the mid-1890s. In 1897, neighbor William B. Back paid \$2,235 for their much distressed 160 acre ranch, re consolidating Wales Arnold's damaged domain.

### William Beriman Back

In March, 1889, according to his homestead application, William Beriman Back moved with his family as permanent settlers on what has ever since been known as the Back Ranch. The Back Ranch today reflects the efforts of William Back, a pioneering ranchman known widely, his wife Margorie and their seven children. The Backs continued to farm and ranch on the landscape along Wet Beaver Creek and around the Well for three generations. The Back Ranch also helps revise our image of Western and Arizona ranching from the popular Texas cowboy import to the highly successful, if less colorful herders from the American heartland.

Descendant of Kentuckians and born in western Missouri in 1856, William Beriman Back came to Arizona in 1875. He had traveled to the Colorado gold fields around Denver and back to Missouri just before heading further west, and was on his way through Arizona to the gold fields of California when he stopped for the winter in the Verde Valley. He found a job herding cattle for the Marr Brothers, Dan and Si, and decided to settle in the Verde. Three years later on December 23, 1878, he married Margorie Dickinson, the daughter of fellow Missourians Samuel and Nancy Dickinson, one of the prominent homesteading families along Oak Creek. For a decade they lived adjacent to her parents homestead, working the fields and ranches nearby.

Starting in 1889, downstream of the Montezuma Well outlet, Bill Back and his family cleared an extensive area for farming. It took him two years to clear the farm lands of scrub and to re-excavate the Montezuma Well outlet and ditch above the fields. In 1890, he claimed and began to use water from Montezuma Well, and in 1897, he ensured his ownership of all prior rights to the water, originally claimed by Wales Arnold in 1870, by purchasing the adjacent Arnold Ranch from the Mehrens & Sherman interests. The Montezuma Well Ditch exists much the same, carrying about the same amount of water and in the same alignment as it has for the last 122 years. To the extent that part of it follows a prehistoric Sinagua alignment, it may well represent the oldest in-use ditch in central Arizona. Off the main ditch he built a 200 foot flume to an island on Wet Beaver Creek and irrigated a patch of melons, pumpkins, and vines. While the Island Ditch no longer carries water, the alignment is easily traced by a constant depression and rock alignments leading to fields that have existed since originally being cleared over one-hundred years ago. Charles Lummis visited the Well in June of 1891 collecting information for a chapter in his book, *Some Strange Corners of Our Country*. Of Back's Ranch he wrote: "Between the cliff and the creek is pinched an irrigating-ditch, which carries the waters of the well half a mile south to irrigate the ranch of a small farmer. Probably no other man waters his garden from so strange a source."<sup>17</sup>

They also tended a herd of cattle that ran in winter on the adjacent public land and in summer near Bill Back Butte east of Stoneman Lake on the Mogollon Rim range. Bill Back ran his cattle with the help of his brothers-in-law, Alfred and Ed Dickinson, and later his sons and nephews. Community round-ups occurred as they had before, with several described in the reminiscences of ranch hands. Bill Back's "brand was the one bar half circle," or hat brand<sup>18</sup> Local markets included the expanding copper mining camp of Jerome, the lumber mills of Flagstaff and the county seat of Prescott. With the rise in cattle market prices by the mid-1890s Back and other ranchers prospered. In 1895, Bill built a five bedroom house with a Dutch-hip roof, which included a formal dining room and a screened-in sleeping porch to accommodate guests. This house burned in February of 1929, leaving only the outline of the original buildings and porch. According to Back's homestead application, at its peak the homestead included: "house 24 x 50, 8 rooms, barn 16 x 80, with sheds; granary

<sup>16</sup> Will C. Barnes, *Western Grazing Grounds and Forest Ranges, A History of the Live-stock Industry as Conducted on the Open Ranges of the Arid West, with Particular Reference to the Use Now Being Made of the Ranges in the National Forests* (Chicago: The Breeder's Gazette, 1913), pp. 25-29.

<sup>17</sup> Charles F. Lummis, *Some Strange Corners of Our Country - The Wonderland of the Southwest* (New York: Century Co., 1892), p. 133.

<sup>18</sup> Example round-up reminiscences are in M. O. Dumas, "Roundup of 1896" and Fred W. Coxen, "A Forest Ranger's Experience in Sedona" in *Sedona Westerners, Those Early Days...Oldtimers' Memoirs, Oak Creek-Sedona, and the Verde Valley Region of Northern Arizona* (Camp Verde: Verde Independent, 1968) pp. 115-122, 155-160; Zeke Taylor, *Reflections of the Past as it Rolled Along* (Humboldt, Arizona: Humboldt Publishing and Advertising, 1987) pp. 28-40. Quote from Dumas p. 56.

Back Ranch Historic District

Yavapai, AZ

Name of Property

County and State

10x 8, chicken coop 12x 12; smoke house 12x14; another dwelling 12x28 with 8 rooms; corn crib 10x12, wire fence with encloses 40 acres."<sup>19</sup>

The 1900 census lists Bill and Margorie Back on the ranch, with all seven children, Mildred, Alfred, Bertha, Harry, the twins Jessie and Jennie, and "Little Bill." Back grew produce and hay and maintained an orchard in the fields south and west of his home. These products along with the preserved meat products from the smokehouse were sold throughout the Verde Valley as well as the high country, including Flagstaff. A teacher who lived next to the Back Ranch and farm later recalled: "There never was on this earth a more thoughtful and generous group of people than our Beaver Creek neighbors who opened their hearts and took in two waifs...[They] showered us with fresh fruits and vegetables, homesmoked ham and bacon, scrumptious homemade bread, and the most delicious cinnamon buns ever to come out of an oven. Pupils brought us sweet milk, home churned butter, and fresh eggs. We had never seen so much and such delicious and nourishing food."<sup>20</sup> Back served on the school board, was local voting precinct judge, and served on the road commission. In testimony supporting his homestead claim, the local postmaster Henry Wingfield said, Back "is one of our best citizens."<sup>21</sup>

A number of family reminiscences describe the ranch in the 1890s. Back's oldest daughter Mildred recalled, "There were crops to harvest and precious fruit and vegetables to put up for the winter months. Nothing could be allowed to go to waste, for the Backs had many mouths to feed. There were seven children in the family, and, like many pioneer families, their family was a haven to other settlers and neighbors as they passed by."<sup>22</sup> The district contains a distinctive smokehouse built by Back probably ca. 1895. It is among the oldest log buildings in central Arizona. Most period log structures have either rotted away or have been torn down, but because of the preservation provided by the smoking process, along with the establishment of the national monument and subsequent preservation provided by the National Park Service, the building still stands pretty much as it has over the last 115 years. Back carried on the tradition of smoke curing meat he had learned as a child in Missouri. He gathered wood for the smoking process from various sources in the mountains, and his large extended family would gather each fall to slaughter up to 20 hogs for bacon and ham. Bill Back's grandson, Clifton Cherry, said in a 2011 interview that during the curing process, he could remember the children would keep the fire on the dirt floor going in the daytime and the adults would keep the fire going all night. Clifton also remembered that there was a utility area next to the smokehouse where slaughtering and butchering took place. A large vat over a fire was used to render lard and other byproducts of the meat preservation process.

Late nineteenth and early twentieth century descriptions and photographs show a prosperous farm and ranch operation. In 1899, George Hance described the fifteen farms along Wet Beaver Creek as "some of the finest farms in the Verde Valley," with Bill Back cultivating 120 acres of his 320 acre homestead.<sup>23</sup> His brother Othe had a 160 acre claim nearby. A 1901 water survey described Bill Back's use of 153 inches of water from Montezuma Well for his "finely improved place."<sup>24</sup> His problems included floods, which washed out ditch heads and damaged his crop and fields. School teacher Eulalia Bourne described the Wet Beaver Creek farms in her reminiscence of the 1910s: "The upper farms, nearest the rim, specialized in fruit, and in the spring the orchards were bright with cherry, apricot and peach blossoms. Later in the season masses of many-colored hollyhocks filled the area along the creek. The lower farms specialized in grain and hay, especially alfalfa, usually sold directly from the farm. Other products – fruit, meat, and truck-farm produce – were taken to the nearest towns to be sold there." Of the Back Ranch, she wrote: "Located half way between the Verde River and the Mogollon Rim, it was a desirable camping ground, partly because of a pleasant grove of trees that grew near the creek. The farm produced mainly alfalfa, which was baled and sold to tourists." She also "spent many delightful late afternoons at this amazing natural wonder [Montezuma Well]."<sup>25</sup>

Back and other Verde Valley ranchers had to overcome a number of roadblocks to their settlement. First was an increasing feud with downstream water claimants, especially in the Salt River Valley around Phoenix over the flow of mountain streams. Also, disputes over Beaver Creek water use among local ranchers ended up in the courts. Back, because of his ownership of the Arnold 1870 water right, was able to retain enough water for his fields. An August 25,

<sup>19</sup> William B. Black testimony, Homestead file, GLO records, National Archives and Records Service, Washington, D. C.

<sup>20</sup> Eulalia Bourne, *Ranch Schoolteacher* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1974), pp. 22.

<sup>21</sup> Henry Wingfield testimony, Back Homestead file, NARS.

<sup>22</sup> Johnie Lee Fain, "Millie's Ride," in Robert C Stevens, ed., *Echoes of the Past, Tales of Old Yavapai, Volume 2* (Prescott: The Yavapai Cowbelles Incorporated, 1964), pp. 233-235.

<sup>23</sup> *Weekly Arizona Journal Miner*, Prescott, August 30, 1899.

<sup>24</sup> O. A. Turney, *Water Supply and Irrigation on the Verde River and Tributaries, Arizona* (Cleveland: Cleveland daily Record, 1901)pp. 3-4.

<sup>25</sup> Bourne, *Schoolteacher*, pp. 4-7.

Back Ranch Historic District

Yavapai, AZ

Name of Property

County and State

1906 court decree divided Beaver Creek water to the farms "according to their priority of settlement and acres cultivated." Back received the entire Montezuma Well outflow, except in times of extreme drought. By then Beaver Creek "no longer flowed to its mouth," but was consumed by the irrigated fields.<sup>26</sup>

Also, the creation of the Black Mesa National Forest (later Coconino National Forest) brought into question all homestead claims within the Forest. Back had received patent to the land in 1907, but not until 1914 did the slow bureaucratic process recognize his claim and quit title or void it as Forest or Federal land. In 1897, the Forest Service introduced a permit process for use of Forest grazing lands, followed a few years later with a use fee. Over protests and grievances, ranchers like Back slowly adjusted to the new system of paying fees and being given specific allotments for use of the former open range on the Mogollon Rim. During these times Back was willing to find resolutions, but was just as willing to stand his ground. One neighbor recalls that on one occasion "there was a difference with cattlemen over Bill Back's cattle. Bill rode down with his rifle and they all talked it over. There was a peaceful settlement."<sup>27</sup> During the 1910s and 1920s the Verde Valley and Rim country stock raisers, like Back, found ways to continue to work their herds on the public domain. The ranchers formed the Beaver Creek Association as part of their continued round-ups, but these slowly ended as ranchers began fencing in their National Forest allotments. The last round-up was in 1929. Because of rheumatism, Bill Back handed over cattle operations to his sons. Though Harry Back died in the flu epidemic of 1918, Fred Back would become one of the valley's long-time ranchers.

In 1929, Bill Back died. In his later years he had reduced the activities on his ranch. In 1912 he sold off most of the Arnold Place, but retained the eighty acres of irrigated fields that made up the heart of the Back Ranch. These he continued to sow with alfalfa. Draft horses from logging operations and, in later years, mules from Grand Canyon National Park, were sometimes wintered on the Back Ranch and these irrigated fields served as farmland and animal pasture. His surviving children had moved off the ranch, with his daughter Mildred becoming one of the large stock raisers of Yavapai County. Her son Norman Fain, "took to the cattle business like a duck to water," and became head of the Arizona Cattle Grower's Association and in 1944-46 served in the state legislature.<sup>28</sup> In 1926, Margorie Back died, and the ranch was leased for a short time to Ella Lowdermilk, who opened and operated the Rimrock Post Office in a building on the Back Ranch. She was the mother of Romaine Lowdermilk, owner of the Rimrock Dude Ranch, located on the other portion of the Arnold Homestead. When Rimrock Ranch sold in 1930, Ella moved the Rimrock Post Office to Soda Springs, one of the dude ranches catering to the area's expanding tourism business.

The Back family home, smokehouse, irrigation system and associated fields represent what was historically considered essential to survive and prosper during the homestead period. The Back Ranch is a well-preserved example of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Century settlement phase of Arizona history. The life the Back family led at Montezuma Well is exemplary of the progress wrought by hard work and diligence. Their descendants were among the most prominent citizens and contributors to central Arizona during the twentieth century.

## Entertainment and Recreation

In 1913, Bill Back reported that he had hung up his lariat and bought a Buick, a symbolic statement about the changing world and about his move toward catering to tourists. Tourism as a business expanded with the railroads, especially the Santa Fe, which promoted passenger travel to the landscapes and many cultures of the Southwest from the 1890s into the 1950s. The construction of highways brought people off the railroads more easily. In 1912-13, the state had improved the county road by Back's ranch to one of the few "Good Roads" or improved dirt highways for an automobile road from Phoenix to Prescott to Camp Verde to Flagstaff. As early as 1910, Bill Back was guiding tourists around Montezuma Well and offering guided excursions through nearby Montezuma Castle, one of the first national monuments designated in 1906. During the 1910s Back had converted the Montezuma Well to a tourist attraction, and improved the camping area near his barnyard.

In a local newspaper interview in 1915, Back said: "I have fenced in the huge well, to protect it against vandalism and personally conduct sightseers to the interesting places, as well as to the bleak caverns below the well, where the head men of the [Aztec] tribe evidently held their meetings in the misty past."<sup>29</sup> At this time, travel writer Charles Francis

<sup>26</sup> H L Hancock, *Report on the Irrigated Lands of the Verde River and Its tributaries in 1914* (Phoenix: McNeil Co, 1914) p. 28.

<sup>27</sup> Jack Beckman, *A History of Montezuma Well* (Rimrock, Arizona, 1990), p. 18.

<sup>28</sup> Roscoe G. Willson, *Pioneer and Well Known Cattleman of Arizona, Volume Two* (Phoenix: McGraw Commercial Printery, 1956), p. 12.

<sup>29</sup> *Tucson Daily Citizen* January 22, 1915.

Back Ranch Historic District

Yavapai, AZ

Name of Property

County and State

Saunders visited the site and described his experience: "You pass a ranch every mile or so, and the Well itself is found to be situated inside the wire fence of one... you will experience a bit of a shock, at the fences and in finding that a fee – a modest one, to be sure, in view of what you are to get for it – is imposed for entrance to the well. Proceeding from the ranch house across an eighth of a mile of open, treeless mesa, you come quite without warning, to a crater-like opening 500 feet across."<sup>30</sup> As part of the tourist operation, Back guided him into the Well's caves and for a rowboat ride on the Well's lake.

The Montezuma Well had been an attraction since its re-discovery in 1864. When the military road up Beaver Creek to the Mogollon Rim was built in 1870, the Montezuma Well was a designated "camping ground" for freight wagons rolling off the rim. Wales Arnold kept a boat in the Well for tours, and propelled visitors around it, including military officers who wrote the first articles, in 1869, and Hiram C. Hodge, author of the first description in a book, *Arizona As It Is* (1877). Some visitors left their names in a cave at the Well as a form of advertising, including one historic graffiti still visible by Phoenix photographer George Rothrock: "Photos of this by Rothrock, Phoenix, 1878." By the 1890s, geologists and archeologists had visited the Well and its ruins. Southwest publicist Charles Lummis included a chapter on the Montezuma Well in his 1892 book *Some Strange Corners of Our Country*, which touted it as a destination to visit. A year later, the Santa Fe Railroad advertised it as a place to visit along its line in Arizona. One woman traveler in 1898, visited the Montezuma Well, area farms, and Montezuma Castle and wrote nothing "except the [Grand] Canyon could ever impress a person as it does."<sup>31</sup> By the 1890s, the Montezuma Castle and Montezuma Well were must visit sites on one's Southwestern travel itinerary.

For example, future U. S. Senator Carl Hayden, later instrumental in the creation of national monument status for the property, visited Montezuma Well when he was 18 years old as illustrated in an article from the *Globe*, Arizona newspaper, *The Arizona Silverbelt*, published Saturday, August 24th 1895, titled "An Excursion Party"

"Professor E. L. Stormont and party arrived from the north on Monday and resumed their homeward journey to Tempe the same day. The party comprised of E. L. Stormont and wife, Mrs. C. F. Springer, Miss Josie Frankenberg, Miss Louie Gage, Carl Hayden and Don J. Frankenberg all of Tempe and Mrs. Jerry Millay of Phoenix. They were well equipped for their long journey - a four horse Concorde coach, a stout wagon and buckboard and all the paraphernalia of a complete camping outfit. The ladies were becomingly attired in bloomers, a very sensible costume for mountaineering.

The party left Tempe July 8 and have visited Prescott, Montezuma's Well, Flagstaff, Grand Canyon of the Colorado, San Francisco Mountain and Natural Bridge and enjoyed the outing greatly. The only unpleasant incident of the trip was the death at Grand Canyon from a lightning stroke of Biatchley Porter and the serious injury of his brother Yale Students. Prof. Stormont and party were in the vicinity and rendered timely assistance, and Mr. C. T. Springer of the Tempe excursionists returned to Connecticut with Louis Porter and the remains of his brother. Prof Stormont and party returned to Tempe via Riverside and Florence."

Montezuma Well, Montezuma Castle and Soda Springs were common destinations of eastern visitors who disembarked from rail stations at Flagstaff, Prescott, Jerome, and after 1912, the Verde Valley Railroad station in Clarkdale. The Montezuma Well Picnic Area provided camping accommodations not only for tourists, but for general travelers in wagons and later cars passing along the Stoneman Lake route from Prescott and the Verde Valley on to Flagstaff, Grand Canyon, and the Indian reservations.

A number of travelogues, reminiscences or books on visiting the Well during this period have been published. For example, in 1913 Nicholas Roosevelt, the nephew of Teddy Roosevelt, described Montezuma Well as a stop in his travels between Phoenix and Grand Canyon where he was able to buy hay for his horses and gain a trusted insight into the route ahead from Bill Back. Roosevelt traveled across Arizona from Mesa to the North Rim of the Grand Canyon making preparations for his uncle to come to the North Rim to hunt mountain lions and visit the newly discovered Rainbow Bridge.

<sup>30</sup> Charles Francis Saunders, *Finding the Worth While in the Southwest* (New York: Robert M. McBride, 1918, revised 1928, 1937) pp. 169-70.

<sup>31</sup> Comments about such 1890s tours are in Mona Lange McCroskey, ed., *Summer Sojourn to the Grand Canyon, the 1898 Diary of Zella Dysart* (Prescott, Arizona: HollyBear Press, 1996), and Mary J. Straw Cook, *Immortal Summer, a Victorian Woman's Travels in the Southwest, the 1897 Letters & Photographs of Amelia Hollenback* (Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico Press, 2002); None mention Back suggesting he had yet to open a tourism business. Quote from Cook, p. 109.

Back Ranch Historic District

Yavapai, AZ

Name of Property

County and State

Visitation to Montezuma Well was detailed in a February 16, 1917 *Coconino Sun* article headlined "800 Visitors See Montezuma Well During Year 1916... Eight hundred sightseers registered at Montezuma's Well during 1916, according to William Back of Beaver Creek, owner of the ranch that incloses (sic) the famous natural phenomenon, who is in Prescott on a business visit." "If the improved highway between Prescott and Flagstaff, via Camp Verde and the Well goes in," said Back, "we will have 8,000 visitors a year." In her reminiscence Eulalia Bourne justified Back's operation (and fee collection): "He became so busy showing his wonder, with its cliff dwellings around the steep, high, encircling walls, that he found he was neglecting his farm activities, with an accompanying loss of profits. So he began to charge twenty-five cents an entrant for tourists. He didn't charge the local people."<sup>32</sup>

Upon the death of his father, William Beriman Back, in 1929, William Lester "Little Bill" Back and his family returned to Montezuma Well to oversee the operation of both the farm and tourist operation. Little Bill was born at the Montezuma Well Ranch in 1892, where he was raised. As the youngest of the Back children, he worked the ranch when tourism began to take a bigger part of the operation. He and his cousin William "Pretty Bill" Back were the last children to leave the ranch home. He married Mae Cox whose family had come to the Verde from southwestern Colorado in the 1890s. Following Little Bill's marriage to Mae, the couple moved to Flagstaff, then homesteaded south of Twin Arrows on the eastern side of Anderson Mesa and lived for a time in Winslow while Bill worked as a driller at Meteor Crater and his children attended school.

In an arrangement among the heirs of Bill Back, Little Bill agreed to operate the Back Ranch. He built a bungalow for his family, near the site of the 1895 home and still standing. He worked or leased the ranch lands, continued the smokehouse and hog operation, and focused on developing the tourist trade. When he returned to Montezuma Well, Little Bill built a small stone roadside building which housed a museum and later two rental cabins near the campground and picnic area. He also rented room for the Beaver Creek School during the 1930s. His experiences and that of his young sons at Meteor Crater influenced tourist management at Montezuma Well. Carl and Gail Back recalled that they spent their free time when school was out at Meteor Crater and became experts at selling meteor fragments and arrowheads, which they picked up in the vicinity, to the many visitors coming off Route 66 and to Meteor Crater. He and his sons developed a line of "petrified" souvenirs, pottery shards and arrowheads. The "petrified" souvenirs included a variety of objects suspended in Montezuma Well water until they developed a heavy coating of limestone.

By the late 1920s, when he returned, the Wet Beaver Creek area had changed. The popularity of the western image in novels and film had attracted Easterners to Arizona wanting to experience the West, its landscape and ranch life. The heyday of dude ranches along Beaver Creek occurred during the late 1920s to World War II. On the adjacent Soda Springs, David Finnie had converted his father's ranch into one of the first ranches specifically marketing to outside guests, the first dude ranch on the creek. His sister, Virginia and husband Romaine Lowdermilk, country musician and dude ranch promoter, built the Rimrock dude ranch in 1928 on a rise over the original Wales and Jennie Arnold home. These were followed by the Beaver Creek Dude Ranch. With the Rimrock and Soda Spring dude ranches on each side of the Montezuma Well Ranch, Little Bill had a steady clientele curious about the natural wonder and ancient peoples. He never improved the property to the level needed to operate it as a dude ranch, but the Montezuma Well attraction was used by the dude ranches to promote the area, which brought campers, dudes, and tourists.

A General Land Office report in 1903 had proposed Federal preservation of the Montezuma Well through acquisition and the setting aside of a section of land around it. Over the next forty years debates and movements stalled to create a Federal Reserve at the site. In 1943, the U. S. Congress passed legislation to add Montezuma Well to Montezuma Castle National Monument. Bill Back oversaw the operation of Montezuma Well including the museum, campground and rental cabins for the estate of his father, from 1930 until funding legislation finally passed in 1946. In 1947, the National Park Service acquired the Back Ranch and established the Montezuma Well unit of Montezuma Castle National Monument. The NPS used the Back structures and essentially continued their tourist operation until the Mission 66 initiative, and the removal of the museum, rental cabins, and outbuildings.

### Social History and Memory

"They came west at an early age, braved the hardships of those unsettled times, established a home, and did their part toward developing an unsettled country." Mildred Back Fain, 1933.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Bourne, *Schoolteacher*, p. 6.

<sup>33</sup> Mrs. Mildred Fain, "Old Timers," in *Pioneer Stories*, p. 69.

Back Ranch Historic District

Yavapai, AZ

Name of Property

County and State

Since its founding in the 1870s, the community of Beaver Creek had always seemed to include three groups, the Midwestern settlers detailed here, the more transitory settlers who might ranch or farm a few years and then move on, and the Yavapai, who returned in increasing numbers around 1900. The Yavapai "adopted commercial agriculture, livestock raising, and wage work in order to coexist with U. S. society," and became neighbors along the creek.<sup>34</sup> The permanent landed minority like the Backs rooted themselves in the community during the first two decades. They established their farm homesteads and ranches, and lived and worked together in them for many years, intermarrying and passing their improved farms on to their children. The continuity required for community social institutions was supplied by these core families, who formed a web of overlapping kin groups and came to control a large portion of the real property along the creek. Within the community the core community of families' persistence existed alongside a group with considerable mobility.

The traditional values of the Midwesterners continued into the twentieth century. A review of the U. S. census enumeration sheets for the Beaver Creek precinct, 1880-1930, shows this community of close knit Midwesterners. From 1880 through 1910, 50 to 70% of the up to 218 settlers were born in the Midwest/Ohio Valley, with by far the largest single state of birth being Missouri, once called "the mother of the West." Intermarriage was common and the movement of children among households indicates the network of social support. By the 1920 and 1930 censuses, those born in the Midwest were replaced by sons and daughters of the Far West as most numerous; indicating that the second and third generation now dominated the community. In many ways, these generations idealized the past of their parents, much as Mildred Back Fain, Bill and Margorie Back's oldest, did of her parents in the quote above.

In communities across the West, the first settlers were revered by later generations, which organized pioneer associations. In the twentieth century, they that remained of the pioneer families formed organizations to recognize these ancestors while preserving their memory. From the early 1920s up through the early 2000s, the Montezuma Well Campground, also known as the Montezuma Well Picnic Area, was the site of the Verde Valley Pioneers Association "Pioneer Picnic." These annual gatherings, which were traditionally held the third Sunday in September, led to the formation of the Verde Valley Pioneers Association in the late 1920s. By the late 1930s, 200 people or more would gather in the picnic grounds. Mildred Back Fain was one-time president of this group and welcomed them to the home ranch.

Among the work done by the Verde Valley Pioneers Association was the publication of *Pioneer Stories of Arizona's Verde Valley* in 1933, which collected the stories, and documented the history of the Verde Valley and its original families. In 1954, a second edition gathered the earlier work and added to the memories as the second generation had done for the first. These accounts detail the history of the migration of these Midwesterners into the region, and provide a collective memory of settlement in the region. Many of the early contributors of these volumes were descendants of William Beriman Back or connected to him through marriage. It also included many stories which retell the history of Montezuma Well. The Verde Valley Pioneers Association was also instrumental in the placing of historic markers, the preservation of what is today Fort Verde State Park, and the continued recreational use of the Back Ranch.

During the latter half of the twentieth century, with the migration of newcomers to the Sunbelt, this social community has been subsumed by a rapid growth of subdivisions and people disconnected to the land's past. The Back Ranch's association with the Verde Valley Pioneers Association as a gathering point for their Pioneer Picnic contributes to its recognition as an important link in the early social history of the Verde Valley, one that tenuously continues to the present.

### Comparative Analysis

Yavapai County is about the size of the state of New Jersey. Within its 8,123.5 square miles are 131 properties and districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places (2012). Of these, 66 are in the county seat of Prescott. Of the remaining 65 properties in the county, five relate to the significant theme of ranching: the Woolsey Ranchhouse Ruins (listed 1977), the Kay-El-Bar Ranch (1978), Thompson Ranch, (1986), the Hank and Myrtle Wingfield Homestead (1999), and the Cross Creek Ranch House (2008).

The Woolsey Ranchhouse Ruins, in Dewey, Arizona, date to 1864 and were occupied by the Bowers family until an 1897 fire. The ruin represents an 1860s-70s ranch operations, an era which include the Wales Arnold ranch operation at the Back Ranch Historic District. Unfortunately, none of the buildings remain from the Wales Arnold period of the Back Ranch

<sup>34</sup> Timothy Braatz, *Surviving Conquest, a History of the Yavapai People* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003), p. 24.

Back Ranch Historic District

Yavapai, AZ

Name of Property

County and State

history. Therefore there is no comparable resource between the significant Woolsey Ranchhouse Ruins and the Back Ranch Historic District.

The Kay-El-Bar Ranch is a dude ranch near Wickenburg, Arizona that retains features from the 1920s and after dude ranch era. The property at one time was owned by Romaine Lowdermilk, who is considered a father of the Arizona Dude Ranch industry. Lowdermilk also operated the Rimrock and Soda Springs dude ranches adjacent the Back Ranch/Montezuma Well. The properties complement each other. The tourist attraction and facilities operated by William "Little Bill" Back were of import to the operation of the adjacent dude ranches on Wet Beaver Creek, but did not duplicate them or the Kay-El-Bar operation.

The Hank and Myrtle Wingfield Homestead in Camp Verde and the Thompson Ranch in Cottonwood are probably the most similar in that they represent the home of settlers from that early Midwest tradition into the Verde Valley. Like the Backs, the Wingfields were prominent in the local history of the Verde Valley. However, the use of the prehistoric irrigation system, the extent of the fields and pasture lands, and the remnants of the larger Back operation better represents a period operation within central Arizona.

The Cross Creek Ranch represents a historic property in the Sedona, Arizona area, a stone house, which dates from the same historic period and represents the same settlement period as the Back Ranch, but lacks the fields, pasture lands and irrigations systems that make the Back Ranch Historic District distinctive. At Cross Creek ranch these related fields and pasture landss have been subdivided and developed.

Back Ranch Historic District

Yavapai, AZ

Name of Property

County and State

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Back Ranch Historic District

Yavapai, AZ

Name of Property

County and State

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Back Ranch Historic District

Yavapai, AZ

Name of Property

County and State

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Back Ranch Historic District  
Name of Property

Yavapai, AZ  
County and State

**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 # AZ - 214 A & B
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):  
AZ - 214 A and B.

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage - 205**

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1. 12S430910mE / 3834604mN
2. 12S431324mE / 3834594mN
3. 12S431303mE / 3833802mN
4. 12S429600mE / 3833815mN
5. 12S429601mE / 3833947mN
6. 12S429925mE / 3834009mN
7. 12S429542mE / 3834019mN
8. 12S429574mE / 3834136mN
9. 12S429809mE / 3834243mN
10. 12S429707mE / 3834423mN
11. 12S430877mE / 3834447mN

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

From a point located at the northwest corner of the southwest quarter of the northeast quarter of Section 31, Township 15 North and Range 6 E, proceed east 1320' more or less, to the northeast corner of the southwest quarter of the northeast quarter of Section 31 Township 15 North and Range 6 E. From that point proceed due south 2640', more or less, to the southeast corner of the northwest quarter of the southeast quarter of Section 31, Township 15 North and Range 6 E. From that point proceed due west 3960', more or less to the southwest corner of the northwest quarter of the southwest quarter of Section 31, Township 15 North and Range 6 E. From that point travel south 13.23 feet. From that point travel west 1644' more or less, to a point east of the center line of School House Wash which marks the southwest corner of Montezuma Well National Monument. From that point go directly north 97.01' more or less, to a point located east of the centerline of School House Wash. From that point travel north 15 degrees east 374.83' more or less to a point located in the center line of School House Wash. From that point, travel north 63 degrees east 846.66', to a point on the south bank of the Montezuma Well Ditch. From that point travel North 40 degrees west 627.95', more or less, to a point along the south bank of the Montezuma Well Ditch. From that point travel due east 593.11', more or less, to the benchmark locating the western quarter corner of Section 31, Township 15 North and Range 6 E. From that benchmark travel 2640' more or less to a benchmark which marks the center of Section 31, Township 15 North and Range 6 E and thence 1320' due north to the point of origin.

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

The boundaries of the Back Ranch Historic District include the 1888 William B. Back homestead patented July 18, 1907 plus 45 acres settled by Wales Arnold in 1870 and acquired by William B. Back in September of 1897. This boundary coincides with the all the property owned by the Back family that lies within Montezuma Well National Monument.

Back Ranch Historic District  
Name of Property

Yavapai, AZ  
County and State

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### 11. Form Prepared By

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name/title William L. Cowan; Edited and revised by Robert L. Spude, Ph. D., NPS-IMRO  
organization Arrowhead Historical Research Associates date \_\_\_\_\_  
street & number 4365 N. Alchise telephone 928-300-7466  
city or town Rimrock, state Arizona zip code 86335  
e-mail verdehistory@yahoo.com

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### Additional Documentation

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Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps –**

- USGS 7.5 Minute Quadrangle Map - Lake Montezuma and – USGS 7.5 Minute Quadrangle Map Casner Butte
- Back Ranch Sketch Maps, 2012
- Googlemaps map, 2012

### Historic Photos of the Back Ranch Historic District

Figure 1. William Beriman Back Family from left: Harry Wales, Fred, Margie, Mildred, William Beriman, William Lester ("Little Bill" on his lap), Bertha, and twins Jennie Lee and Jessie Lee - c. 1900. Courtesy of Helen Cain.

Figure 2. Wales and Jennie Arnold c. 1877. Courtesy of Sharlot Hall Museum

Figure 3. Wales Arnold and buckboard in front of Arnold Station – 1877 Williscraft Photo. Courtesy of Sharlot Hall Museum

Figure 4. William Beriman Back c. 1900, mowing alfalfa on the Back Ranch Farmland, Pasture and Fields - Site 2. Courtesy of Helen Cain.

Figure 5. Real Photo Postcard of the rowboat on Montezuma Well taken by Albin Aveldson – Jerome - 1916. Courtesy of William L. Cowan

Figure 6. Real Photo Postcard of the William Beriman Back House taken by Albin Aveldson - 1916. Courtesy of Greg Back

Figure 7 - William Beriman Back sitting on the front porch of his home which burned to the ground in February of 1929. House Foundation - Site 4. Courtesy of Helen Cain.

Figure 8. William Beriman Back standing near the Montezuma Well swallett at a point near where the water could be diverted into the Montezuma Well Ditch - Structure 1. Jack Beckman Photo courtesy of George Beckman.

Figure 9. Montezuma's Well ad from 1926 map - *A Pictorial Relief Map of The Heart of Arizona*, printed and distributed by the Yavapai County Chamber of Commerce. Courtesy of William L. Cowan.

Back Ranch Historic District

Yavapai, AZ

Name of Property

County and State

Figure 10 - Frank Pinkley, Superintendent of Southwestern National Monuments camping at the Montezuma Well Picnic Area / Campground - Site 1, when it was operated by William Beriman Back c. 1925. Courtesy of Montezuma Castle National Monument

Figure 11. Duck Hunting at Montezuma Well. Jerome Dentist, Lee Hawkins photograph, c 1920, of a man shooting ducks at Montezuma Well. Courtesy Glenda Farley.

Figure 12. Remnant of the original Hohokam ditch alignment, a section of which was used by the Montezuma Well Ditch c. 1928 - Structure 1. William B. Back residence in the background. Photo courtesy of Helen Cain.

Figure 13. William Lester and Mae (Cox) Back Residence - Building 1 as it appeared c. 1947 following the acquisition by the National Park Service. Courtesy of Montezuma Castle National Monument.

Figure 14. William Beriman and Marjorie (Dickinson) Back Smokehouse - Building 2 (in foreground) with the William L. Back residence (in background) as it appeared c. 1947. Courtesy of Montezuma Castle National Monument.

Figure 15. Verde Valley Pioneers Association Pioneer Picnic held at Montezuma Well Picnic Area c. 1947 - Site 1. Courtesy of Montezuma Castle National Monument.

Figure 16. Rimrock Post Office, chartered on July 11, 1928 with Ella Loudermilk as Post Mistress was located in this building - c. 1947 photo. Courtesy of Montezuma Castle National Monument.

Figure 17-Montezuma Well Museum with the William Beriman Back Smokehouse in the background - c. 1947. Courtesy of Montezuma Castle National Monument.

Figure 18. Entrance to Montezuma Well along the Stoneman Lake Road illustrating entrance fees and attractions c. 1947. Courtesy of Montezuma Castle National Monument.

Figure 19. Example of Signage near the primary observation point at Montezuma Well c. 1940. Courtesy of Helen Cain.

## Historic American Building Survey Resources

Figure 20 - William B. Back Ranch – Montezuma Well, Historic American Building Survey, National Park Service, Todd Delyea, Intermountain Support Office, 2002. Accessed on-line on Library of Congress website: <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/az0491.sheet.00001a/>

Figure 21 – Back Residence - William B. Back Ranch – Montezuma Well, Historic American Building Survey, National Park Service, Todd Delyea, Intermountain Support Office, 2002. Accessed on-line on Library of Congress website: <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/az0492.sheet.00001a/>

Figure 22 – Smokehouse - William B. Back Ranch – Montezuma Well, Historic American Building Survey, National Park Service, Todd Delyea, Intermountain Support Office, 2002. Accessed on-line on Library of Congress website: <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/az0493.sheet.00001a/>

## Historic Maps and Documents

- Figure 23 - 1877 General Land Office Survey, Township15 North, Range 5 East, G&SRB&M. - Detail of 1877 General Land Office Survey Showing Arnold Station and Fields in Section 36, T15N, R5E and Approximate Boundaries of the Back Ranch Historic District and Montezuma Well National Monument.
- Figure 24 - 1904 General Land Office Survey, Township15 North, Range 6 East, G&SRB&M. - Detail of 1904 General Land Office Survey showing Back Ranch in Section 31, T15N, R5E. Figure 22 - Detail of William Beriman Back Claim in Section 31.

Back Ranch Historic District

Yavapai, AZ

Name of Property

County and State

- Figure 25 – Plat of William B. Back Homestead, Section 31, Township 15 North, Range 6 East, G&SRBM, approved July 18, 1907.
- Figure 26 – Homestead Certificate No. 81, Application 253, Deed showing the issuance of title to William B. Back for 156.47 acres of land signed by Theodore Roosevelt.

### Additional Resources

- Figure 27 - Montezuma Well Ditch Measurements – Documentation of the Montezuma Well Ditch alignment established by William B. Back over the route of a prehistoric ditch from just above the smokehouse to the Montezuma Well outlet. Documentation also of the alignment of the Island Ditch from where it left the Montezuma Well Ditch, crossed a flume to the island, and to the location of the historic fields. 3 page survey and photos of two historic ditches located in the Back Ranch Historic District.

---

### Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Back Ranch Historic District

City or Vicinity: Rimrock

County: Yavapai

State: Arizona

Photographs 1-28 Photographer: William L. Cowan

Date Photographed: 01/03/2012

Photographs 29-38 Photographer: Robert L. Spude

Date Photographed: 08/31/2012

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

1. AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0001  
Back, William Lester and Mae (Cox) Residence – North elevation
2. AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0002  
Back, William Lester and Mae (Cox) Residence - Building 1 – Northeast Elevation
3. AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0003  
Back, William Lester and Mae (Cox) Residence - Building 1 – Southeast Elevation
4. AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0004  
Back, William Lester and Mae (Cox) Residence - Building 1 – Southwest Elevation
5. AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0005  
Back, William Beriman and Margie (Dickinson) Smokehouse - Building 2 – Northeast Elevation
6. AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0006  
Back, William Beriman and Margie (Dickinson) Smokehouse - Building 2 – Northeast Corner Detail
7. AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0007

Back Ranch Historic District

Yavapai, AZ

Name of Property

County and State

Detail Showing Building 2, Back, William Beriman and Margie (Dickinson) Smokehouse (in Background) - Building 1, Back, William Lester and Mae (Cox) Residence and Site 3, Back, William Beriman and Margie (Dickinson) House Foundation (In Foreground)

8. AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0008  
Back, William Beriman and Margie (Dickinson) Smokehouse - Building 2 - West Elevation
9. AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0009  
Detail Looking East - Montezuma Well Ditch - Structure 7
10. AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0010  
Looking East Along Montezuma Well Ditch - Structure 7
11. AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0011  
Historic Rubble Retaining Structure - Montezuma Well Ditch - Structure 7
12. AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0012  
Flume / Ditch Transition Point - The Island Ditch
13. AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0013  
Rocks Marking Alignment of Historic Ditch - The Island Ditch
14. AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0014  
Montezuma Well Picnic Area / Campground - Site 6
15. AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0015  
Montezuma Well Ditch – Structure 1 and Montezuma Well Picnic Area / Campground - Site 6
16. AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0016  
Abandoned Garden Area - Back Ranch Farmland, Pasture and Fields - Site 5
17. AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0017  
Abandoned Fields - Back Ranch Farmland, Pasture and Fields - Site 5
18. AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0018  
Back Ranch Farmland, Pasture and Fields - Site 5
19. AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0019  
Overhang and Detail of Pig Pen- Hog Pen and Dry Storage Area - Site 4
20. AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0020  
Storage Area - Hog Pen and Dry Storage Area - Site 4
21. AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0021  
Metal Fragments in Storage Area - Hog Pen and Dry Storage Area - Site 4
22. AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0022  
Footing Detail - Back, William Beriman and Margie (Dickinson) House Foundation - Site 3
23. AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0023  
Stone Corner Detail - Back, William Beriman and Margie (Dickinson) House Foundation - Site 3
24. AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0024  
Visitor Contact Station / Ranger Headquarters - NC # 1
25. AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0025

Back Ranch Historic District

Yavapai, AZ

Name of Property

County and State

Main Bathroom - NC # 2

26. AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0026  
Picnic Area Bathroom - NC # 6

27. AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0027  
Residential Housing Area - NC # 4 & 5

28. AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0028  
Maintenance / Workshop Complex – NC # 6

29. AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0029  
View west over Beaver Creek Road to Back, William Lester and Mae (Cox) Residence, Smokehouse, 1895 residence site, Barn and barnyard site, and NPS housing and shop area with picnic area at right. Hog pens, and dry storage area under rimrock left of smokehouse.

30. AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0030  
Barn and barnyard site with artifacts.

31. AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0031  
Rimrock Post Office site and artifacts.

32. AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0032  
Prehistoric irrigation ditch exhibit near Back House.

33. AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0033  
View to north inside Montezuma Well near water level showing prehistoric dwellings.

34. AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0034  
Inside cave at Montezuma Well water level with historic graffiti: "Photos of this by Rothrock, Phoenix, 1878."

35. AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0035  
Montezuma Well outlet at Wet Beaver Creek.

36. AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0036  
Left portion of panorama, view to north slightly west, across subdivision on Chipmunk Hollow Road, across Wet Beaver Creek, looking at Back Ranch fields, site of Rimrock Post Office, and picnic area under trees at middle right. These fields are part of the original homestead lands of Wales Arnold, acquired and improved upon by William B. Back. New subdivisions, left background, on remainder of Arnold homestead.

37. AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0037  
Mid portion of panorama, view north, across Chipmunk Hollow Road, across Wet Beaver Creek, looking at Back Ranch fields, and at center middle hidden in the trees the Back Ranch campground/picnic area, ranch house, smokehouse and related sites, and NPS housing and shop.

38. AZ – Yavapai County\_Back Ranch Historic District \_ 0038  
Right portion of panorama, view to north slightly east, looking at Montezuma Well outlet at center far right at Wet Beaver Creek, which flows in trees across mid-ground. Parallel to the creek and across the fields a line of cottonwood and sycamore demarks the irrigation canal route. The fields are at left and center, and grazing lands beyond. Mogollon Rim in distance.

Back Ranch Historic District  
Name of Property

Yavapai, AZ  
County and State

**Property Owner:**

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

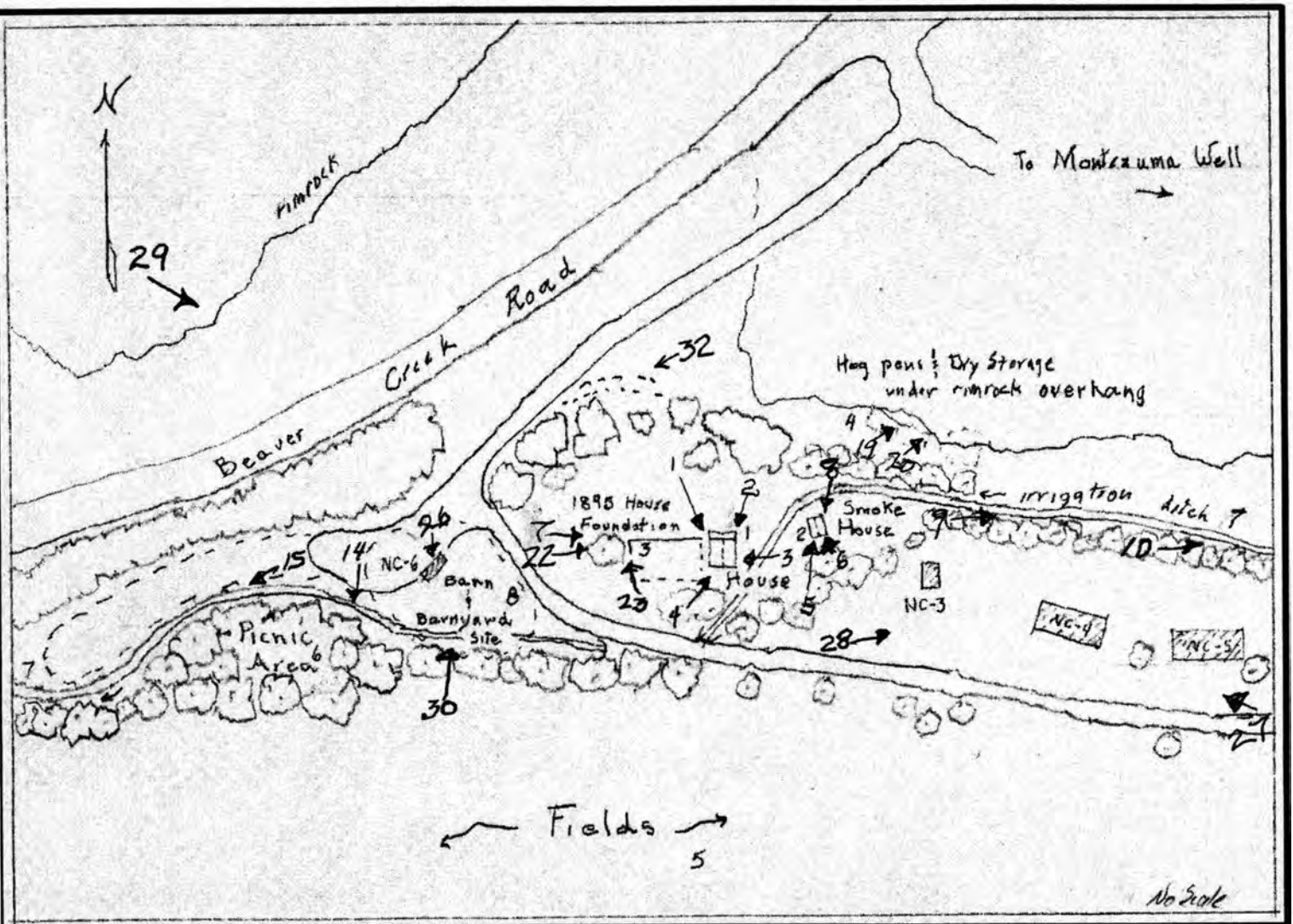
name National Park Service  
street & number 527 S. Main Street telephone 928.567.5276  
city or town Camp Verde state AZ zip code 86322

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Back Ranch Historic District  
Name of Property

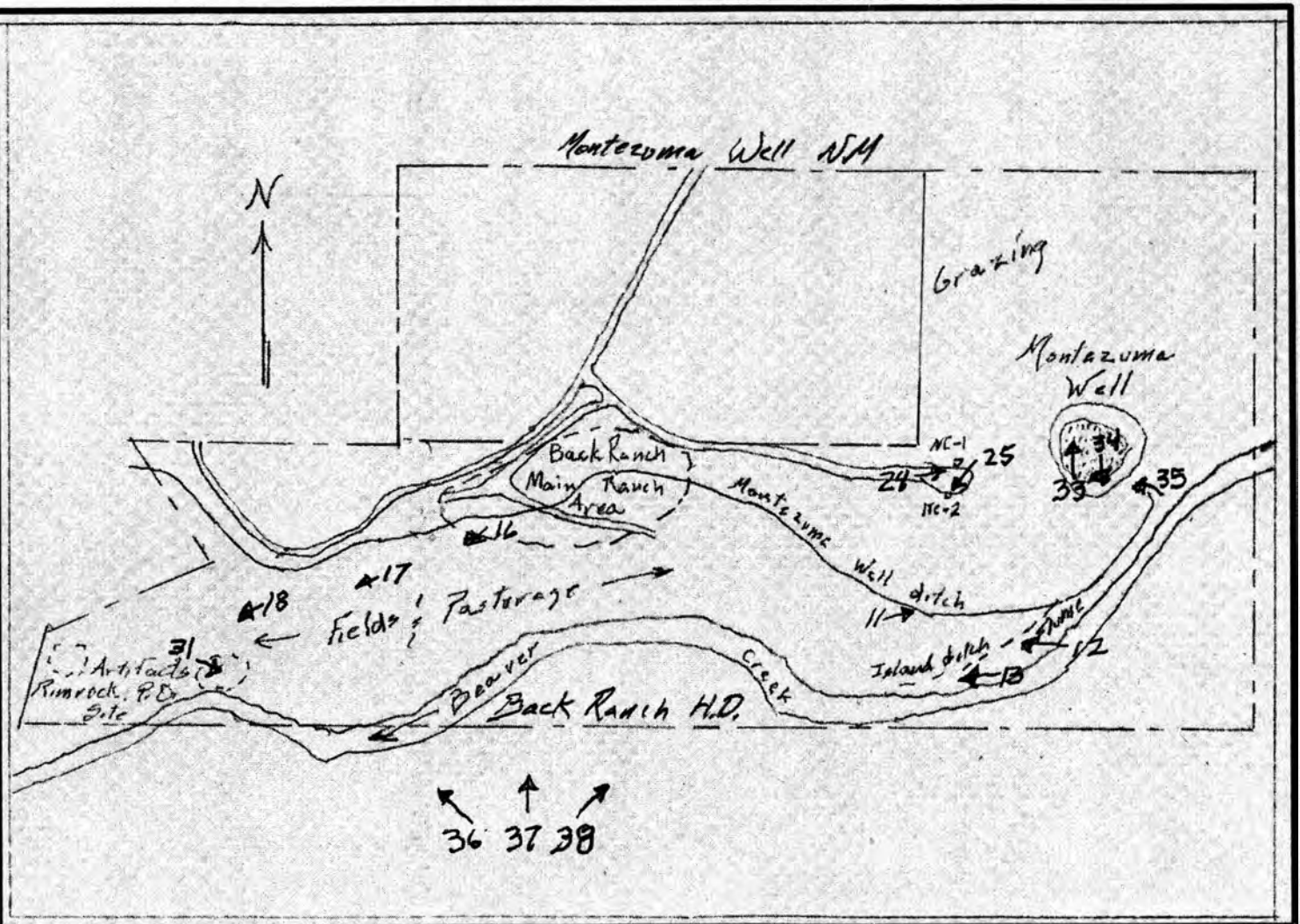
Yavapai, AZ  
County and State



Photographs key to Back Ranch Historic District ranch house and surrounding area detail.  
Robert L. Spude field sketch map, 2012.

Back Ranch Historic District  
Name of Property

Yavapai, AZ  
County and State



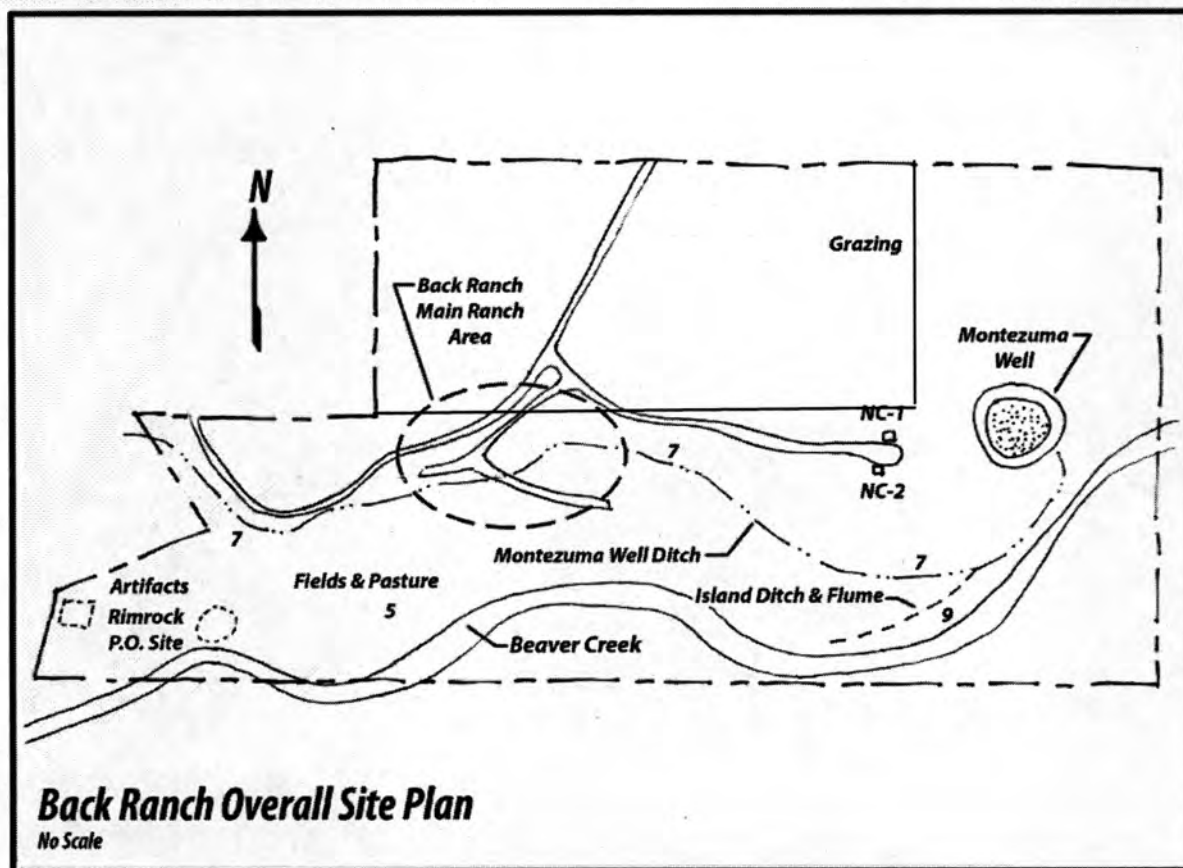
Photographs key to Back Ranch Historic District outside main ranch house area.  
Robert L. Spude field sketch map, 2012

Back Ranch Historic District

Yavapai, AZ

Name of Property

County and State



Montezuma Well unit, Montezuma Castle National Monument boundary is dashed line.  
"L" shaped Back Ranch Historic District within monument boundary (solid line). Carrie Mardorf, NPS, 2012.

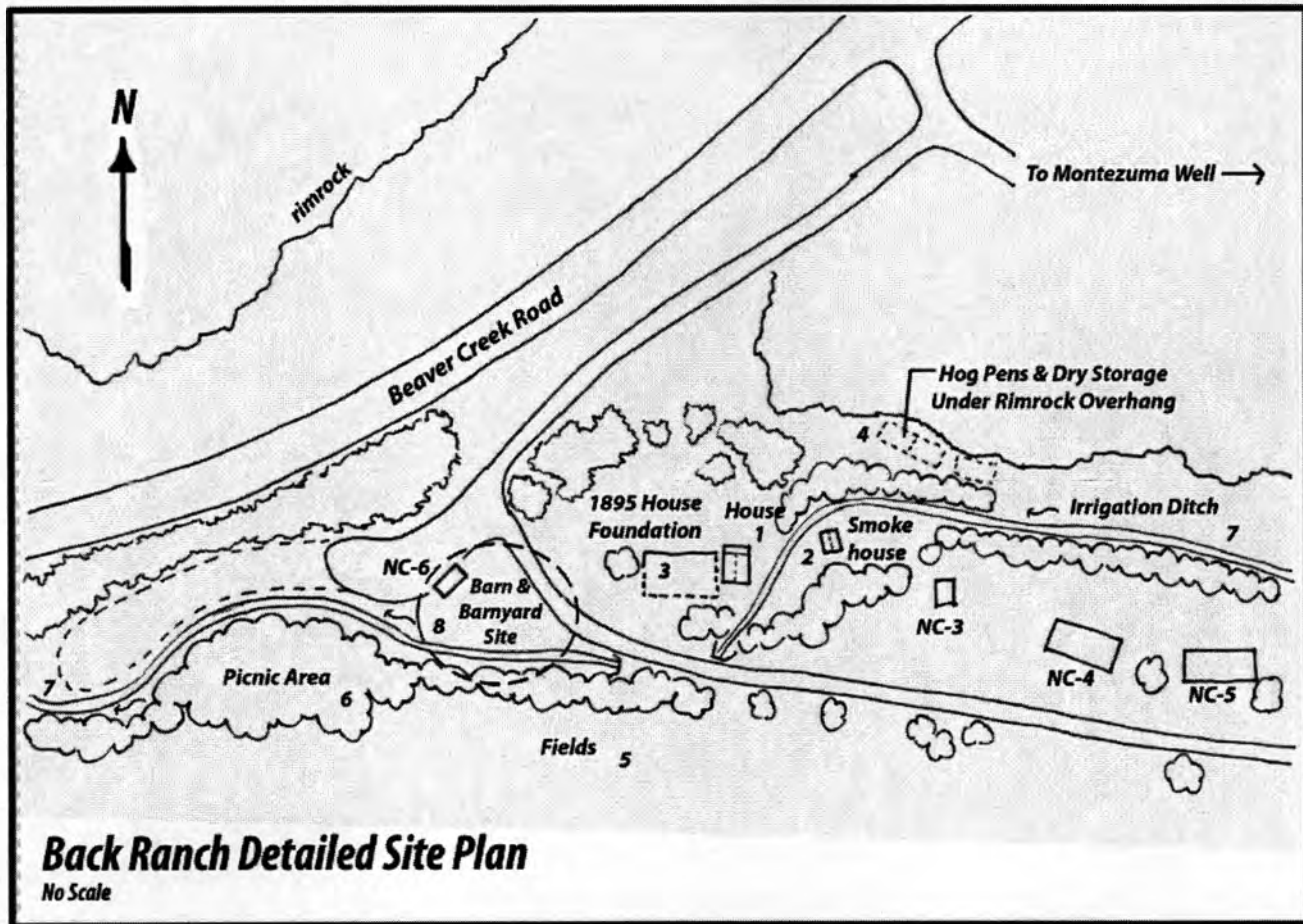
Key: 5- Fields, 7- Montezuma Well Ditch, 9- Island Ditch & Flume, NC-1 NPS Contact Station, NC-2 NPS Restroom.

Back Ranch Historic District

Yavapai, AZ

Name of Property

County and State



Back Ranch Historic District detail of main ranch buildings area. Carrie Mardorf, NPS, 2012.

Key: 1- Back residence, 2- Smokehouse, 3- 1895 House Foundation, 4- Hog Pens & Dry Storage in Rimrock Overhang/Prehistoric Dwelling, 5- Fields, 6- Picnic Area, 7- Montezuma Well Ditch, 8- Barn & Barnyard Site, NC-3 NPS Shop, NC-4 and NPS-5, NPS Housing, NC-6 NPS Picnic Area Restroom.

Back Ranch Historic District

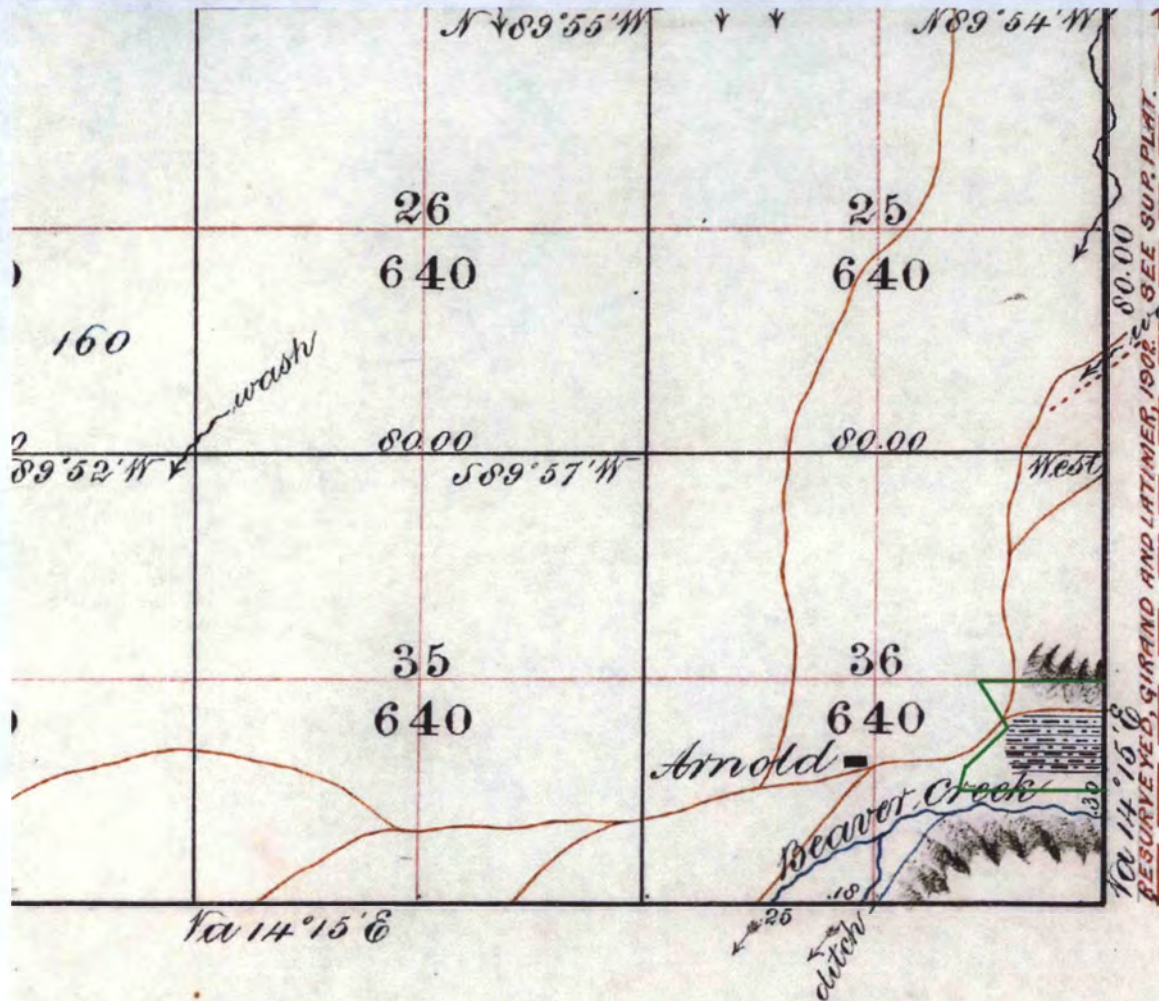
Yavapai, AZ

Name of Property

County and State



Back Ranch extends from Montezuma Well at right to the Back's historic pastures and fields at center along Beaver Creek. The prehistoric and historic irrigation ditch alignment is visible below the Montezuma Well and above the fields, flowing right to left. Modern subdivisions at left about the Montezuma Well unit of Montezuma Castle National Monument. Google maps, 2012. One inch equals 1100 feet.



# Part of an 1877 General Land Office Survey Figure 23

Showing Arnold Station and Associated Fields in Section 36, Township 15 North, Range 6E Gila and Salt River Base and Meridian.

The Approximate Boundaries of the Back Ranch Historic District and Montezuma Well National Monument surround Historic Fields - Northeast Quarter of the Southeast Quarter.

The above Map of Township No. 15 North of Range No. 5 East Gila and Salt River Meridian, Arizona, is strictly conformable to the field notes of the survey thereof on file in this office, which have been examined and approved.

Surveyor General's Office,  
Tucson, Arizona, 27<sup>th</sup> Dec<sup>r</sup> 1877

*John H. Mason*

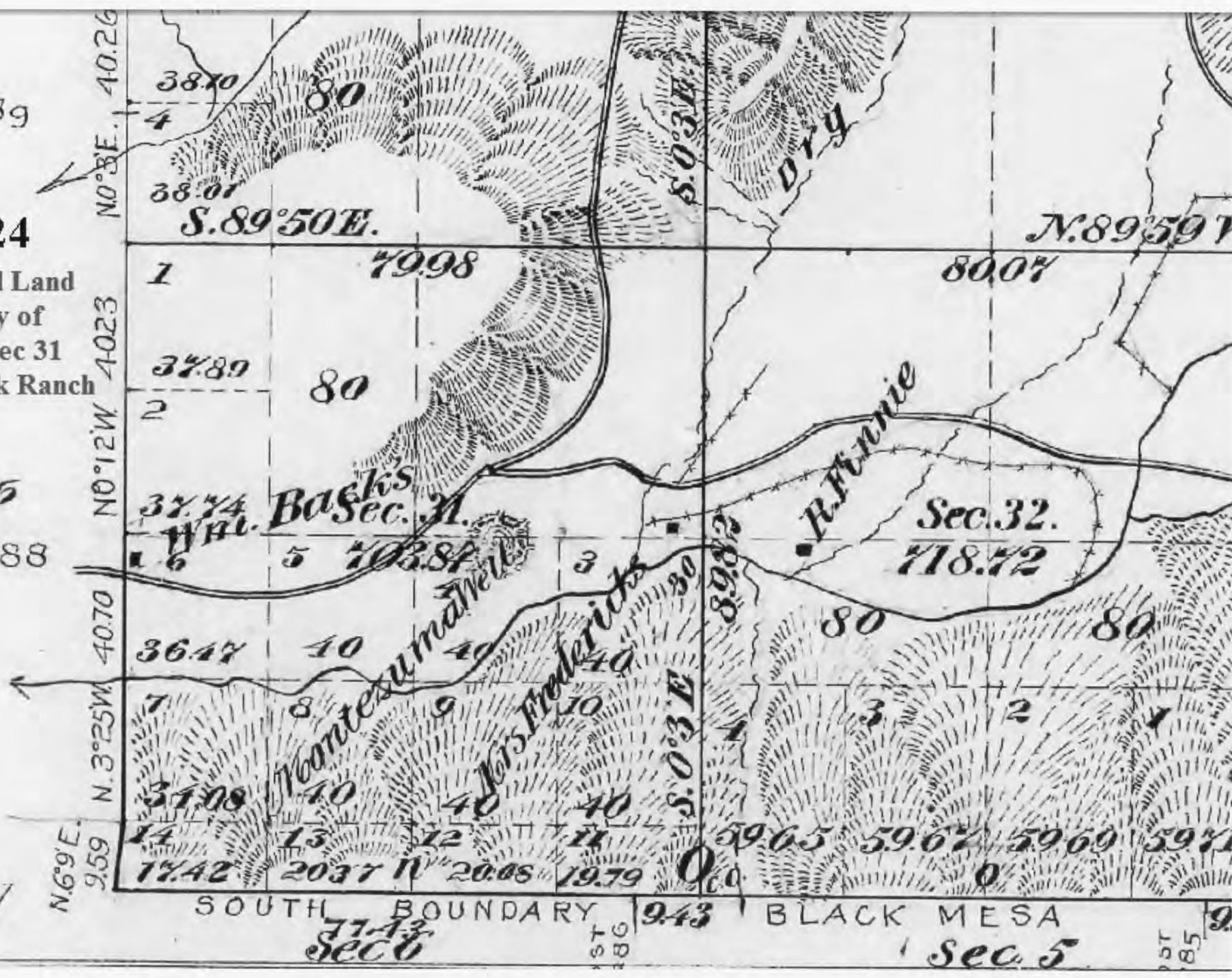
Sur. Gen.

POST N° 89

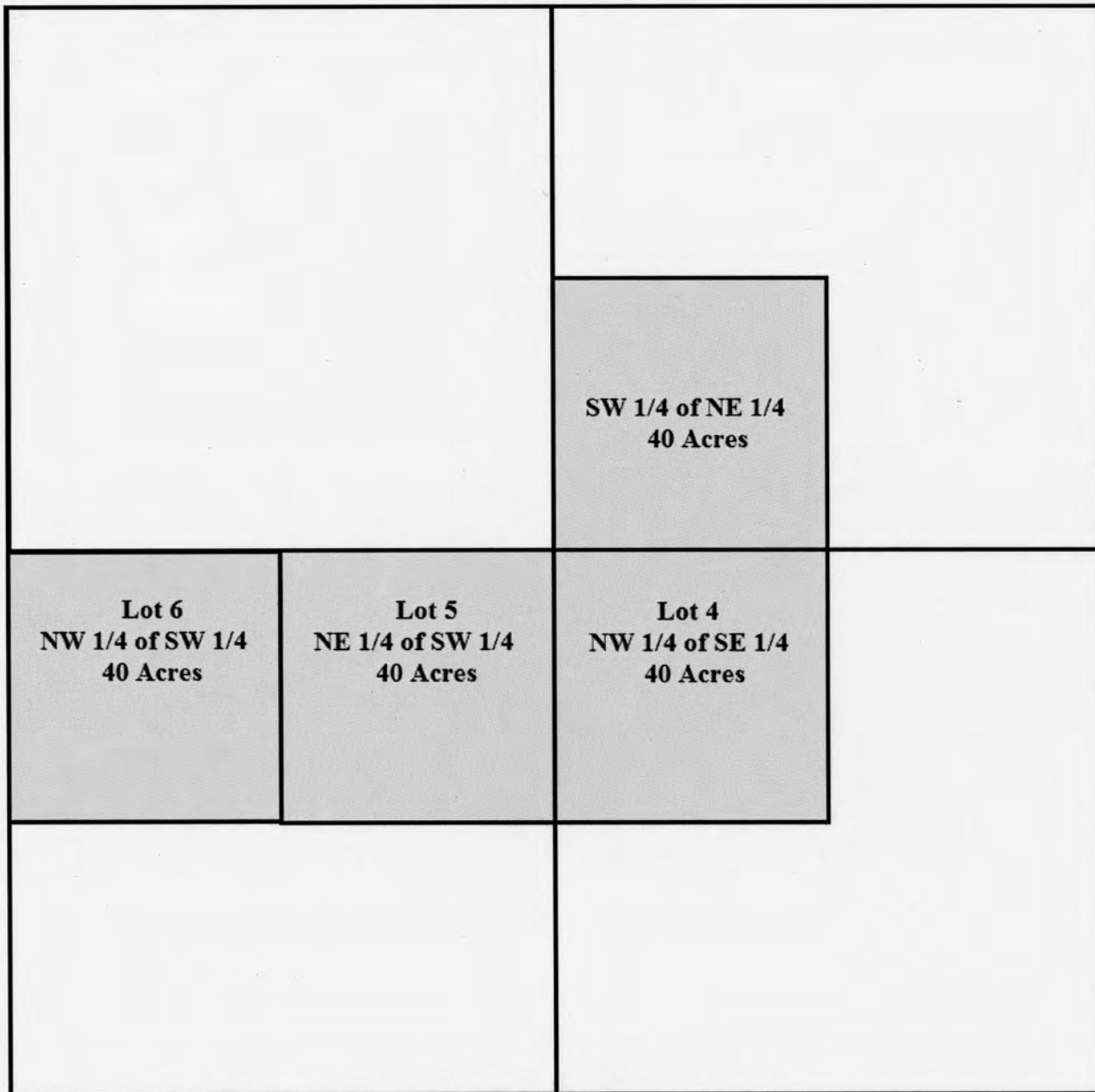
**Figure 24**  
1904 General Land Office Survey of  
T15N, R6E Sec 31  
Showing Back Ranch

SEC. 36  
M  
POST N° 88

N  
POST N° 87



**Figure 25**



**William B. Back Homestead  
Township 15 North Range 6 East Section 31  
July 18, 1907**

The United States of America,

To all to whom these presents shall come, Greeting:

Homestead Certificate No. 51.

Application 253.

WHEREAS, There has been deposited in the GENERAL LAND OFFICE of the United States a Certificate of the Register of the Land Office at Phoenix, Arizona, whereby it appears that, pursuant to the Act of Congress approved 20th May, 1862, "To secure Homesteads to Actual Settlers on the Public Domain," and the acts supplemental thereto, the claim of

William B. Back

has been established and duly consummated, in conformity to law, for the South West quarter of the North East quarter and the Lots four, five and six of Section thirty one, in Township fifteen North of Range six East of Gila and Salt River Meridian in Arizona, containing one hundred and fifty six acres and forty seven hundredths of an acre,

according to the Official Plat of the Survey of the said Land, returned to the GENERAL LAND OFFICE by the Surveyor General:

NOW KNOW YE, That there is, therefore, granted by the UNITED STATES unto the said

William B. Back

the tract of Land above described; TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the said tract of Land, with the appurtenances thereof, unto the said William B. Back

and to his heirs and assigns forever; subject to any vested and accrued water rights for mining, agricultural, manufacturing, or other purposes, and rights to ditches and reservoirs used in connection with such water rights, as may be recognized and acknowledged by the local customs, laws, and decisions of courts, and also subject to the right of the proprietor of a vein or lode to extract and remove his ore therefrom, should the same be found to penetrate or intersect the premises hereby granted, as provided by law. And there is reserved from the lands hereby granted, a right of way thereon for ditches or canals constructed by the authority of the United States.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I, Theodore Roosevelt, President of the United States of America, have caused these letters to be made Patent, and the seal of the General Land Office to be hereunto affixed.

(SEAL)

GIVEN under my hand, at the City of Washington, the eighteenth day of July, in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and Seven, and of the Independence of the United States the one hundred and thirty-second.

By the President: Theodore Roosevelt

By F. M. McKean, Secretary.

H. W. Sanford, Recorder of the General Land Office.

## Figure 27

### William Beriman Back Ditch - Structure #1 Measurements

August 23, 2011

#### **Back House to Well Outlet Measurements**

000' - Measurement started on the concrete bridge / culvert above the Back Smokehouse and proceeded toward the Well outlet.

140' - Location along Hog Pen / Storage Area - Site #3



*Site of historic storage known as Hog Pen / Storage Area - Site #3*

280' - Location along ditch immediately below the alcove below the hog pen.

306' - First concrete head gate.

1290' - This is a location where at some point in the past water was diverted into a secondary ditch or where the ditch historically took a lower path. There is a depression indicating the location of a ditch below this location.



*Jog indicating historic location of secondary ditch*

1766' - This is the location where the historic flume to what the Back family called the "Island" took off from the main ditch. There are remnants of the corrugated iron and planks that constituted the flume at this location. (See Island Ditch Measurements)

2589' - Location of galvanized culvert.

2604 - Location of probable historic diversion / overflow. The remnants of historic rock work are visible on both sides of the ditch bank.



*Location along ditch where water was likely diverted at some point in the past, based on squared corners in walls.*

2638' - Location of historic pipe rusted and constructed w/ rivets.

2773' Check Dam - Rubble masonry w/ Culvert

2794' - Side diversion w/ sizeable leak among the rocks returning water to Beaver Creek.



*Gauging Station*

2838' - Head gate w/ gauging station. Reading 0.76 @ 9:50 AM 8/23/11.

2853' - Ditch passes through 24" culvert approximately 10 feet long.

2995' - Ditch meets Swallet Trail.

3104' - Swallet – Water emerges from rock face below cave.

## **The Island Ditch - Structure #2 - Measurements**

000 – Centerline of Montezuma Well Ditch Maintenance Trail shown as 1766' on Back House to Well Outlet Survey above.

100' - There is approximately 100' of flume constructed of corrugated iron at this location which was fed from the Montezuma Well Ditch and entered a ditch onto what the Back Family called "The Island"



*Abandoned Flume to the "Island"*

906' – Location of historic field on right side of ditch where the Back Family and others had a garden and raised water melons and other garden produce.



Historic Back Family watermelon patch part of  
**Back Ranch Farmland - Site # 2**

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Montezuma Castle National Monument--Back Ranch Historic District--Montezuma Well Unit

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: ARIZONA, Yavapai

DATE RECEIVED: 12/14/12 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 1/14/13  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 1/29/13 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 1/30/13  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 12001227

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: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT  RETURN  REJECT 1-29-13 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

66000082  
Additional Documentation Approved

12001227  
Entered in  
The National Register  
of  
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept

REVIEWER Edson Beall

DISCIPLINE History

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE 1-29-13

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.



AZ - YAVAPAI County - BACK RANCH Historic District - 0001



AZ - YAVAPAI County - BACK RANCH Historic District - 0002



Az - U  
YAVAPAI County Back Ranch Historic District 0003



AZ - <sup>V</sup>AVAPAI County - Back Ranch Historic District - 0004



AZ - YAVAPAI County - BACK RANCH Historic District - 0005



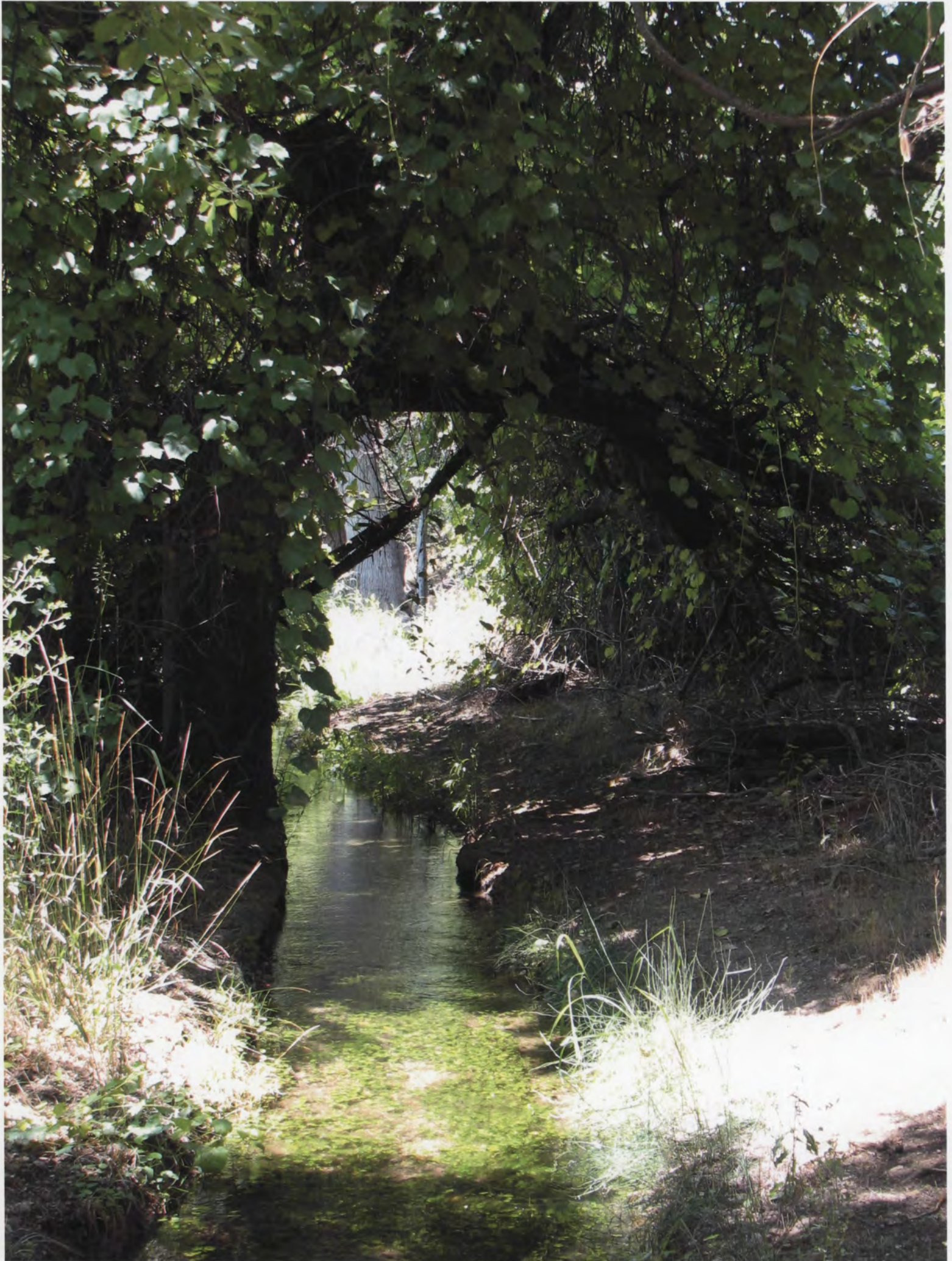
AZ. YAVAPAI County. BACK RANCH Historic District - 0006



AZ - YAVAPAI County - Back Ranch Historic District - 0007



AZ. YAVAPAI County - BACK RANCH Historic District - 0008



AZ - YAVAPAI County - BACK RANCH Historic District - 0009



AZ - YAVAPAI County - BACK Ranch Historic District - 0010



AZ - YAVAPAI County - BACK RANCH Historic District - 0011



AZ - YAVAPAI County - BACK RANCH Historic District - 0012



AZ - YAVAPAI County - BACK RANCH Historic District - 0013



**National Park Service**  
**Montezuma Well**  
Pets Allowed On Leash  
Open Fire Prohibited | Please Use Gas Grills  
Overnight Use Prohibited  
Picnic Area Hours 8:00 am To 5:00 pm  
Emergency Phone Located At Contact Station



AZ. YAVAPAI County - BACK RANCH Historic District - 0014



AZ - YAVAPAI County - BACK RANCH HISTORIC DISTRICT - 0015



AZ - YAVAPAI County - Back Ranch Historic District - 0016



Az. <sup>Y</sup>AVAPAI County - Back Ranch Historic District - 0017



Az. YAVAPAI County - BACK RANCH Historic District - 0018



AZ. MARICOPA County - BACK RANCH Historic District - 0019



AZ - YAVAPAI County - Back Ranch Historic District - 0020



Az - YAVAPAI County - BACK RANCH Historic District - 0021



AZ - YAVAPAI County - Back Ranch Historic District - 0022



AZ - YAVAPAI County - Back Ranch Historic District - 0023



Information

RESERVATION  
SCHEDULE

SECURITY NOTICE  
No smoking or open flames  
No pets allowed

Montezuma Well



Az. YAVAPAI County - BACK RANCH Historic District - 0024



AZ. YAVAPAI County. BACK RANCH Historic District - 0025



Az - YAVAPAI County - BACK RANCH Historic District - 0026



AZ - YAVAPAI County - Back Ranch Historic District - 0027



Az - YAVAPAI County. BACK RANCH Historic District - 0028



HP Premium Plus  
A 2

HP Premium Plus  
A 2 Yavapai County - Park Ranch Historic District - 0029  
HP Premium Plus

HP Premium Plus  
A 2 Yavapai County - Park Ranch Historic District - 0029  
HP Premium Plus



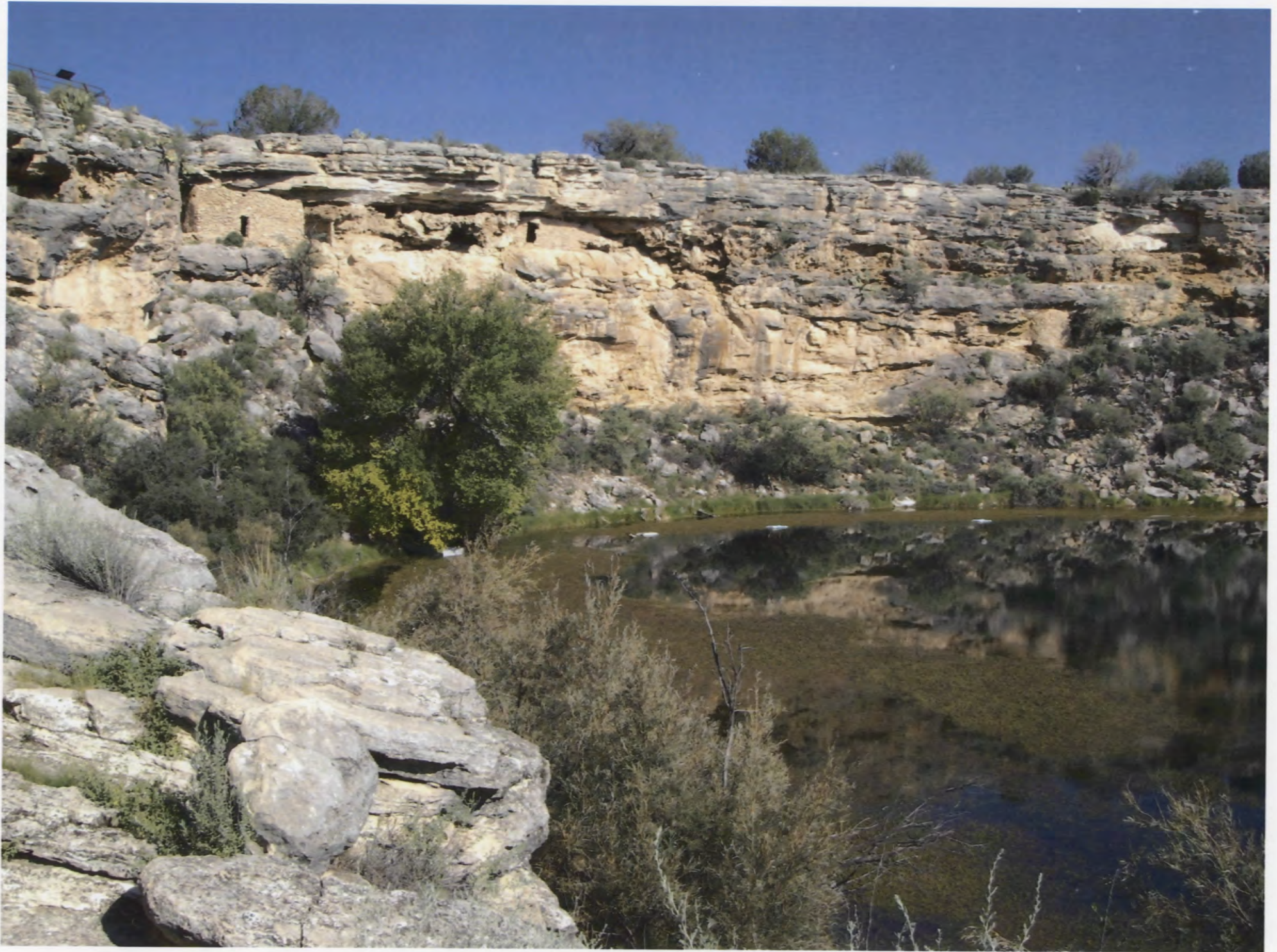
ATZ - Yavapai County - Bach Ranch Historic District - 0030



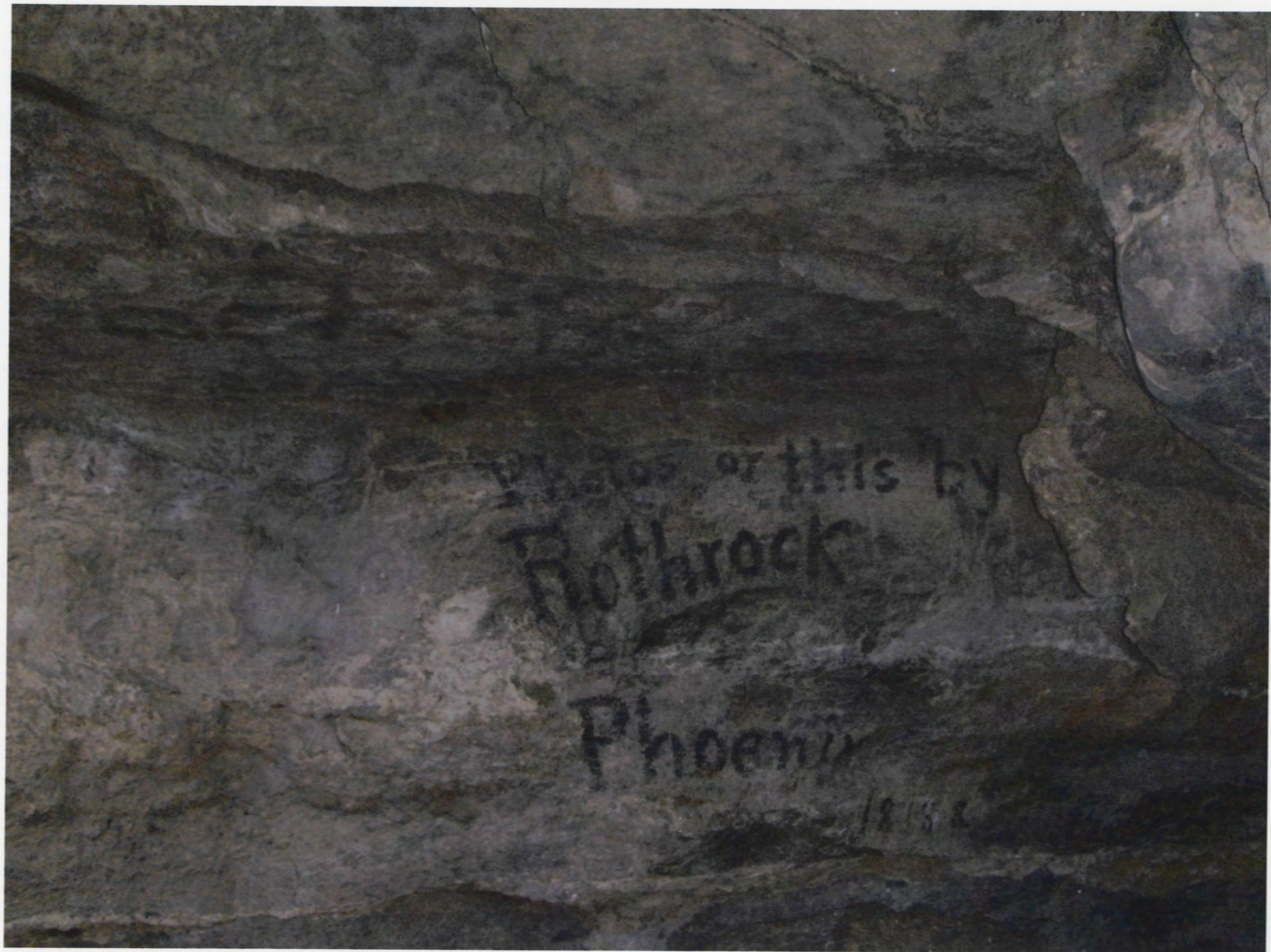








AZ Yavapai County - Back Ranch Historic District - 0033



of this by

Toothrock

Phoenix

1852

AZ Yavapai County - Back Ranch Historic District - 0034











A.Z. - Navajo County - Back Ranch Historic District - 0037







AZ - YAVAPAI County, BACK RANCH Historic District

FIGURE 1



Az. YAVAPAI County - BACK RANCH Historic District

Figure 2



AZ - YAVAPAI County - BACK RANCH Historic District - Figure 3



AZ-YAVAPAI County BACK RANCH Historic District - Figure 4



Monks Well

1924  
Mar 14th 1924

AZ - YAVAPAI COUNTY - BACK RANCH HISTORIC DISTRICT - FIGURE 5



*Backs Place  
Montezuma Well*

AZ - YAVAPAI COUNTY - BACK RANCH HISTORIC DISTRICT - FIGURE 6



AZ - YAVAPAI COUNTY - BACK RANCH HISTORIC DISTRICT - FIGURE 7



Az. YAVAPAI County. BACK RANCH Historic District. Figure 8

# Montezuma's Well

"A Great Natural Wonder"

Many Prehistoric Ruins

Free Shady Camp Ground

Wm. Back, Prop.

Camp Verde.

Az. YAVAPAI County - BACK RANCH Historic District. Figure 9



Az. YAVAPAI County. BACK Ranch Historic District - Figure 10



AZ - YAVAPAI County - BACK RANCH Historic District - Figure 11



AZ. YAVAPAI County - BACK RANCH Historic District - Figure 12



AZ - YAVAPAI COUNTY - BACK RANCH HISTORIC DISTRICT - Figure 13



Az. YAVAPAI County - BACK RANCH Historic District - Figure 14



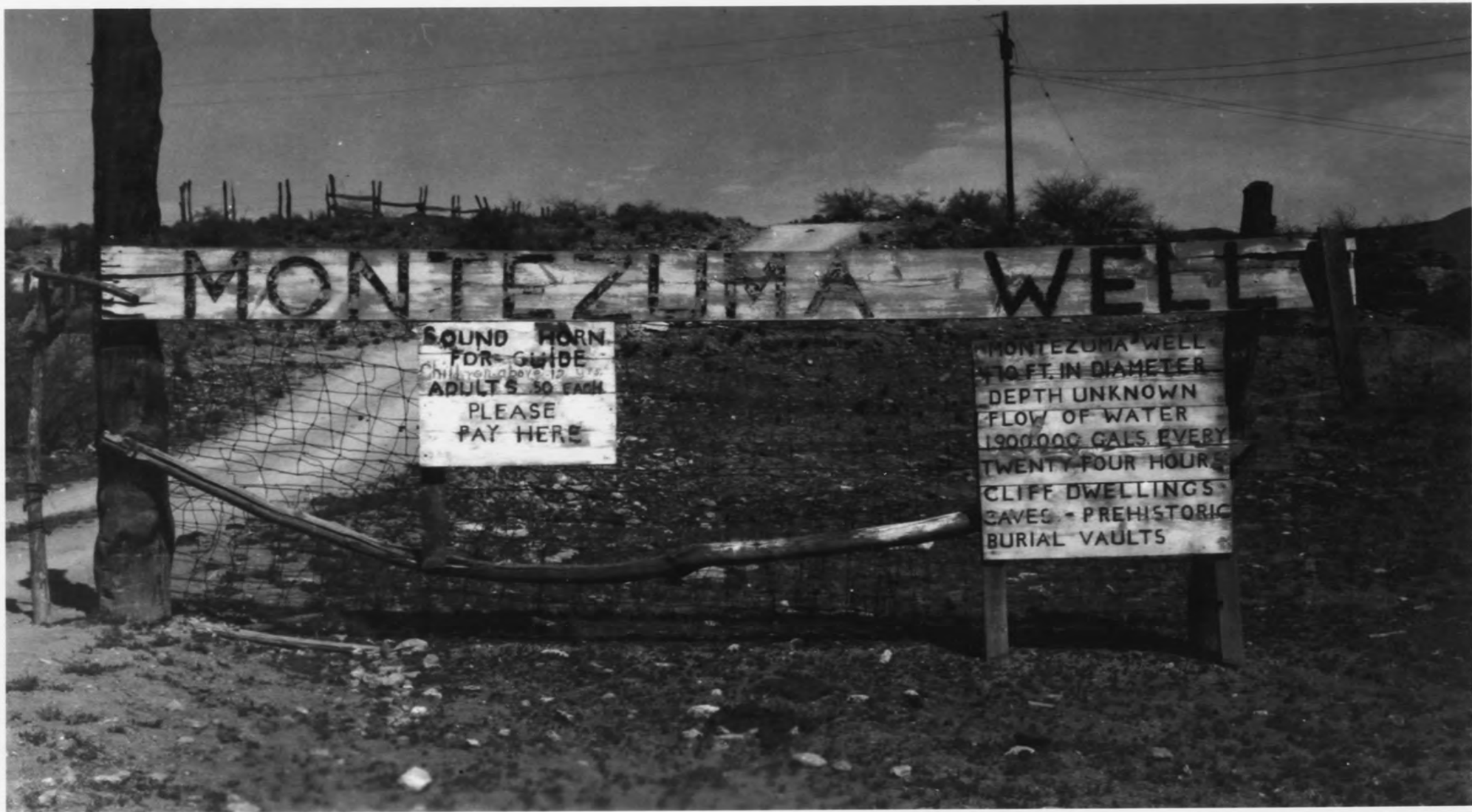
AZ - YAVAPAI County - BACK KNWCH Historic District - Figure 15



Az - YAVAPAI County - BACK Ranch Historic District - Figure 16



AZ. YAVAPAI County - BACK RANCH Historic District - Figure 17



MONTEZUMA WELL

SOUND HORN  
FOR GUIDE  
Child, you above 10 yrs.  
ADULTS .50 EACH  
PLEASE  
PAY HERE

MONTEZUMA WELL  
410 FT. IN DIAMETER  
DEPTH UNKNOWN  
FLOW OF WATER  
1900,000 GALS EVERY  
TWENTY-FOUR HOURS  
CLIFF DWELLINGS  
CAVES - PREHISTORIC  
BURIAL VAULTS

Az - YAVAPAI County - BACK RANCH Historic District - Figure 18

DO NOT EXCHANGE OF  
RESIDUE AND TRIM THE LIMB  
PREFERED

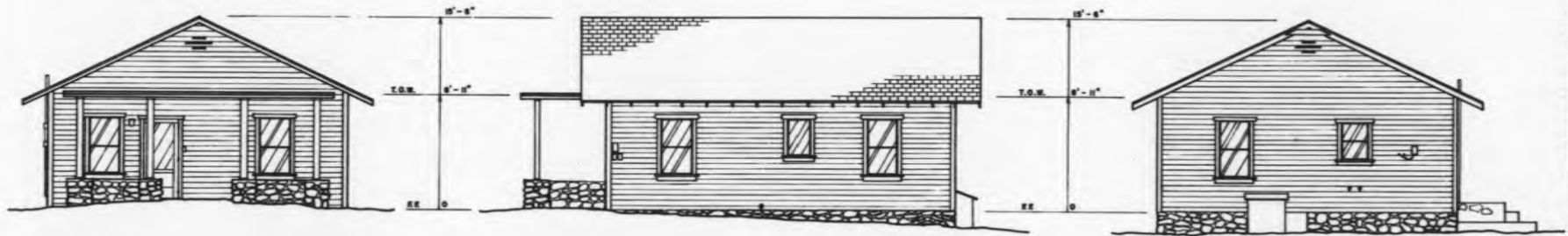
DISTANCE ACROSS 750 FT.  
AVG. DEPTH TO WATER 78"  
WATER AREA 2 3/4 ACRES  
TEMPERATURE 78°  
ESTM. AGE RUINS 3000 YRS.  
FLOW 112 IN. IRRIGATES 112 ACRES  
DEPTH OF WELL UNKNOWN, HAS  
BEEN SOUNDED 500 FT.  
PRE-HISTORIC IRRIGATING DITCHES  
CAN BE TRACED 7 MI. FROM THE  
WELL. STOP AT OUR CAMP  
GROUND AND SEE THEM.  
CAVES →



Az. - YAVAPAI County - BACK RANCH Historic District - Figure 19



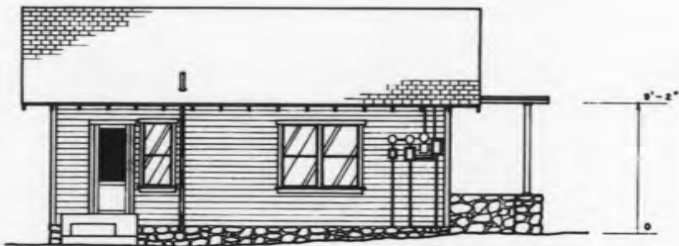
AZ - Yavapai County - Back Ranch Historic District Figure 20



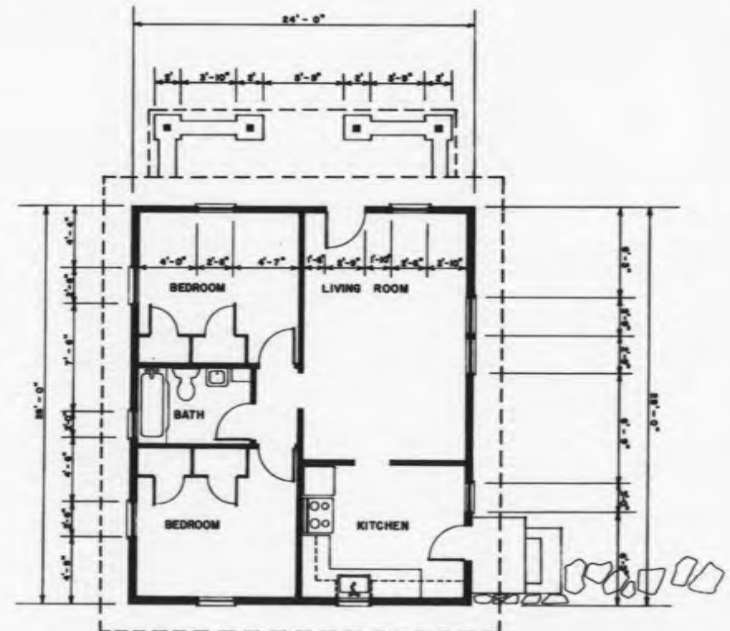
NORTH ELEVATION  
1/4" = 1'-0"

WEST ELEVATION  
1/4" = 1'-0"

SOUTH ELEVATION  
1/4" = 1'-0"



EAST ELEVATION  
1/4" = 1'-0"



FLOOR PLAN  
1/4" = 1'-0"

# BACK RESIDENCE

2002  
 TODD DELVEA  
 INTERMOUNTAIN SUPPORT OFFICE  
 1000 W. 10TH AVENUE, SUITE 100  
 DENVER, COLORADO 80202  
 PHONE: 303.733.1111  
 FAX: 303.733.1112  
 WWW: WWW.INTERMOUNTAINARCHITECTS.COM

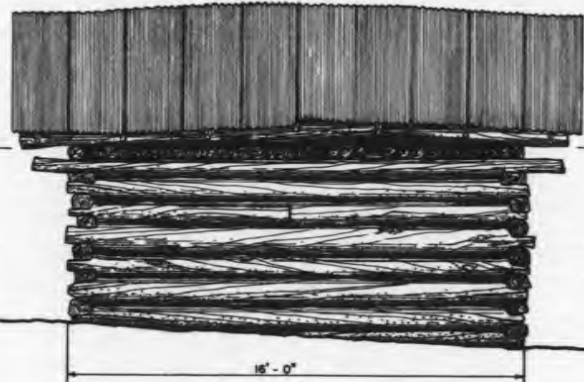
2002  
 WILLIAM B. BUCKLEY ARCHITECTS  
 1000 W. 10TH AVENUE, SUITE 100  
 DENVER, COLORADO 80202  
 PHONE: 303.733.1111  
 FAX: 303.733.1112  
 WWW: WWW.WILLIAMBUCKLEYARCHITECTS.COM

2002  
 HISTORIC AMERICAN  
 BULLDOZER SURVEY  
 SCALE: 1" = 1' 0"  
 ARIZONA AZ-3174

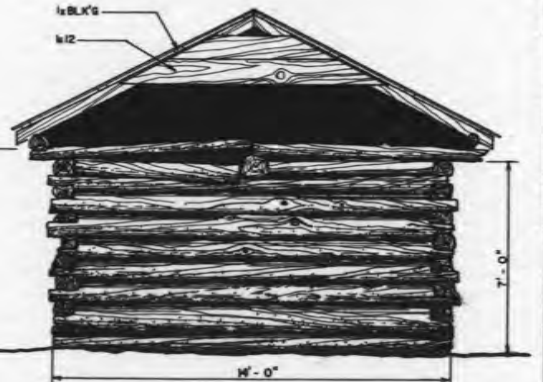
AZ - Navajo County - Back Ranch HD - Figure 21



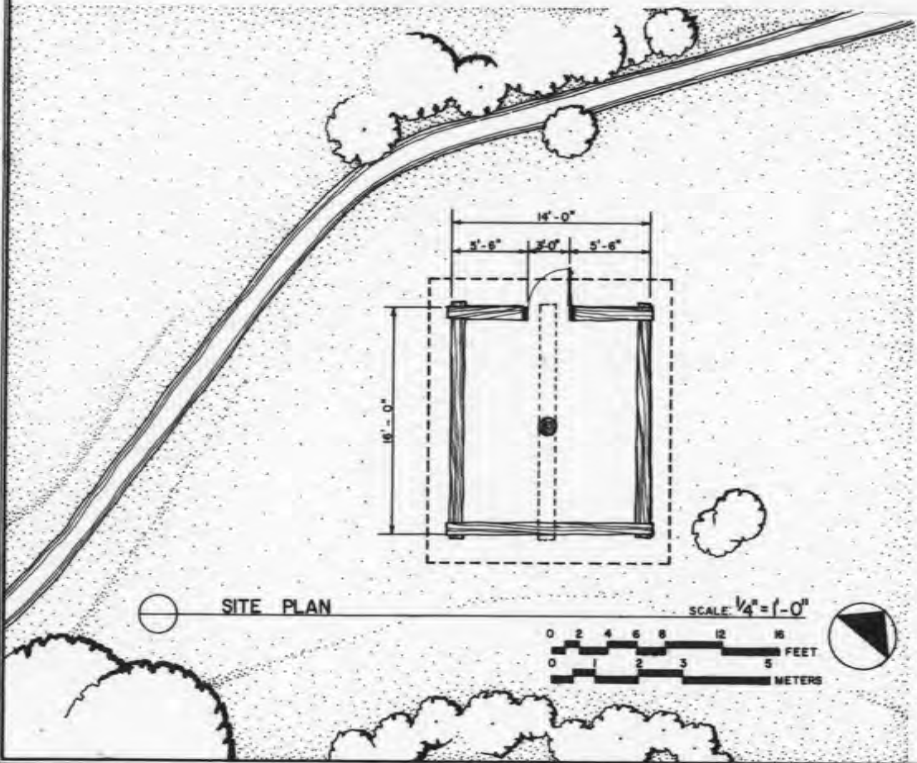
○ NORTH ELEVATION SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"



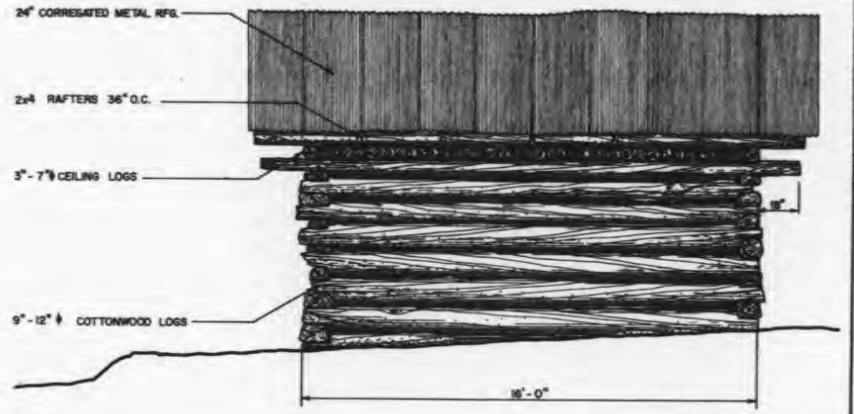
○ WEST ELEVATION SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"



○ SOUTH ELEVATION SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"



○ SITE PLAN SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"



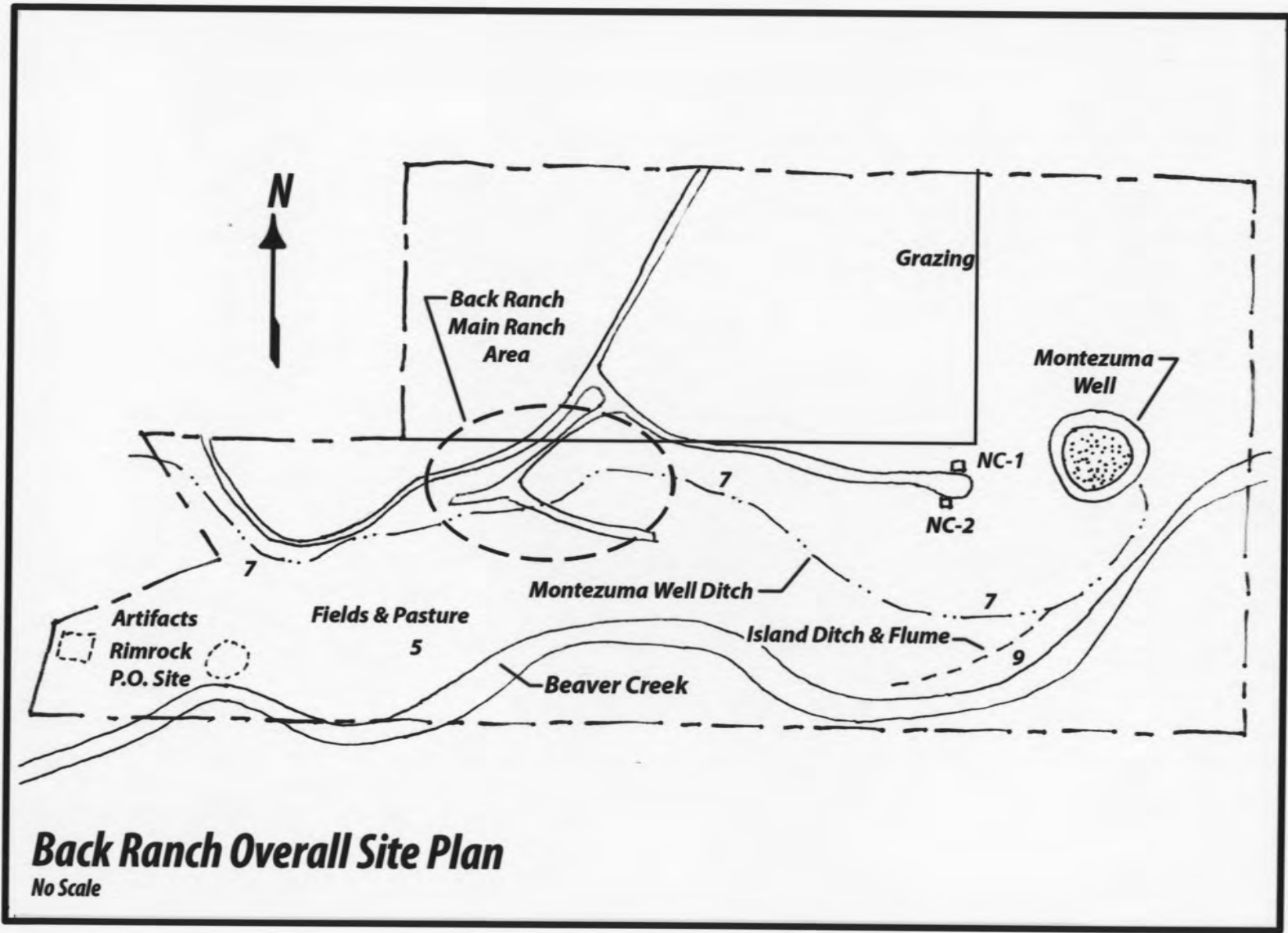
○ EAST ELEVATION SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"



# SMOKEHOUSE

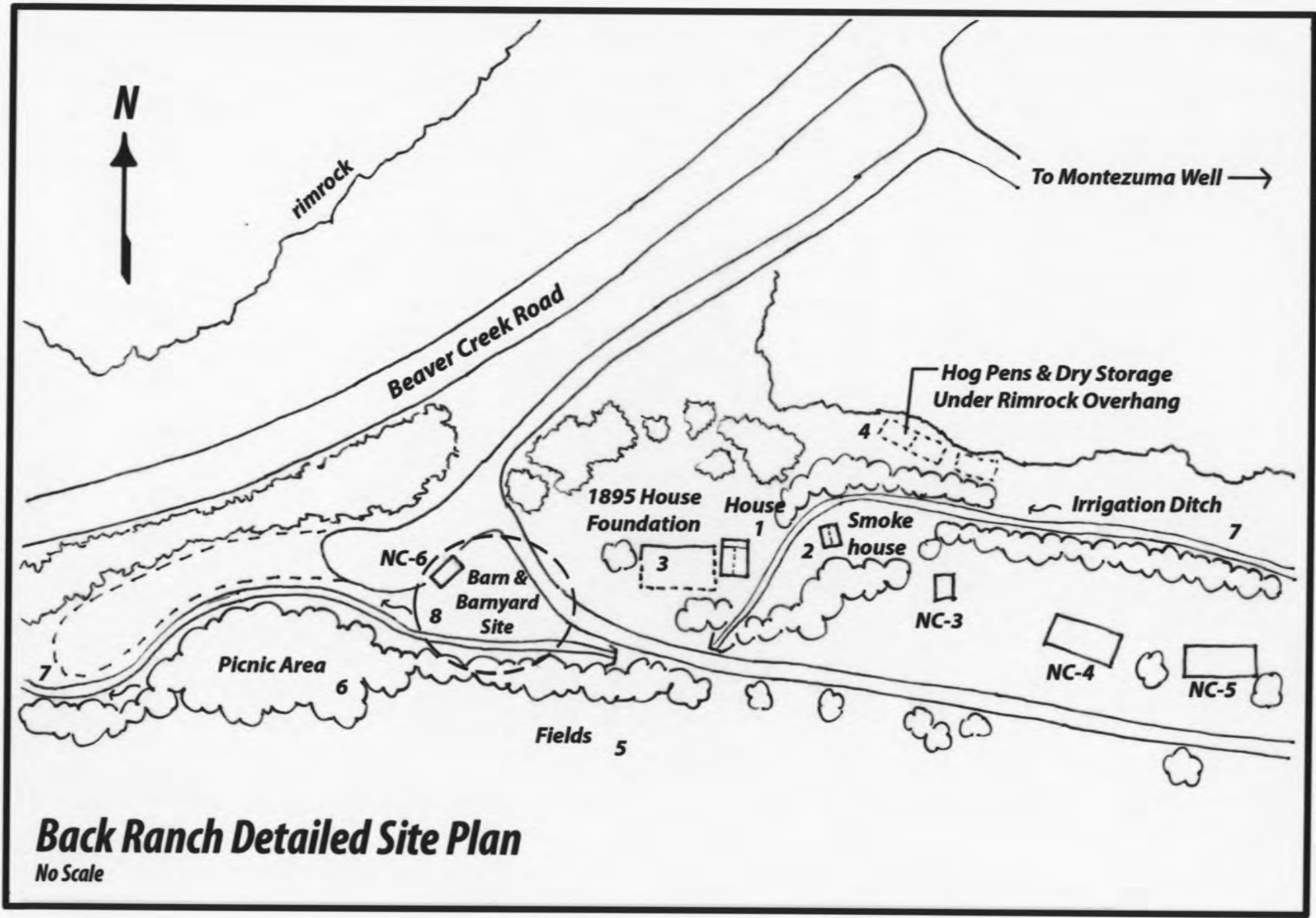
PROJECT NO. AZ-078  
 HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
 SHEET 1 OF 1  
 ARCHITECT: TODD DELVEA, 2002  
 INTERMOUNTAIN SUPPORT OFFICE  
 1000 EAST MAIN STREET, SUITE 100, DENVER, CO 80202  
 WILLIAM B. BACK RANCH SMOKEHOUSE  
 YAVAPAI COUNTY, ARIZONA

Ar - Yavapai County - Back Ranch HD - Fig 022 - 2.2



**Back Ranch Overall Site Plan**  
No Scale

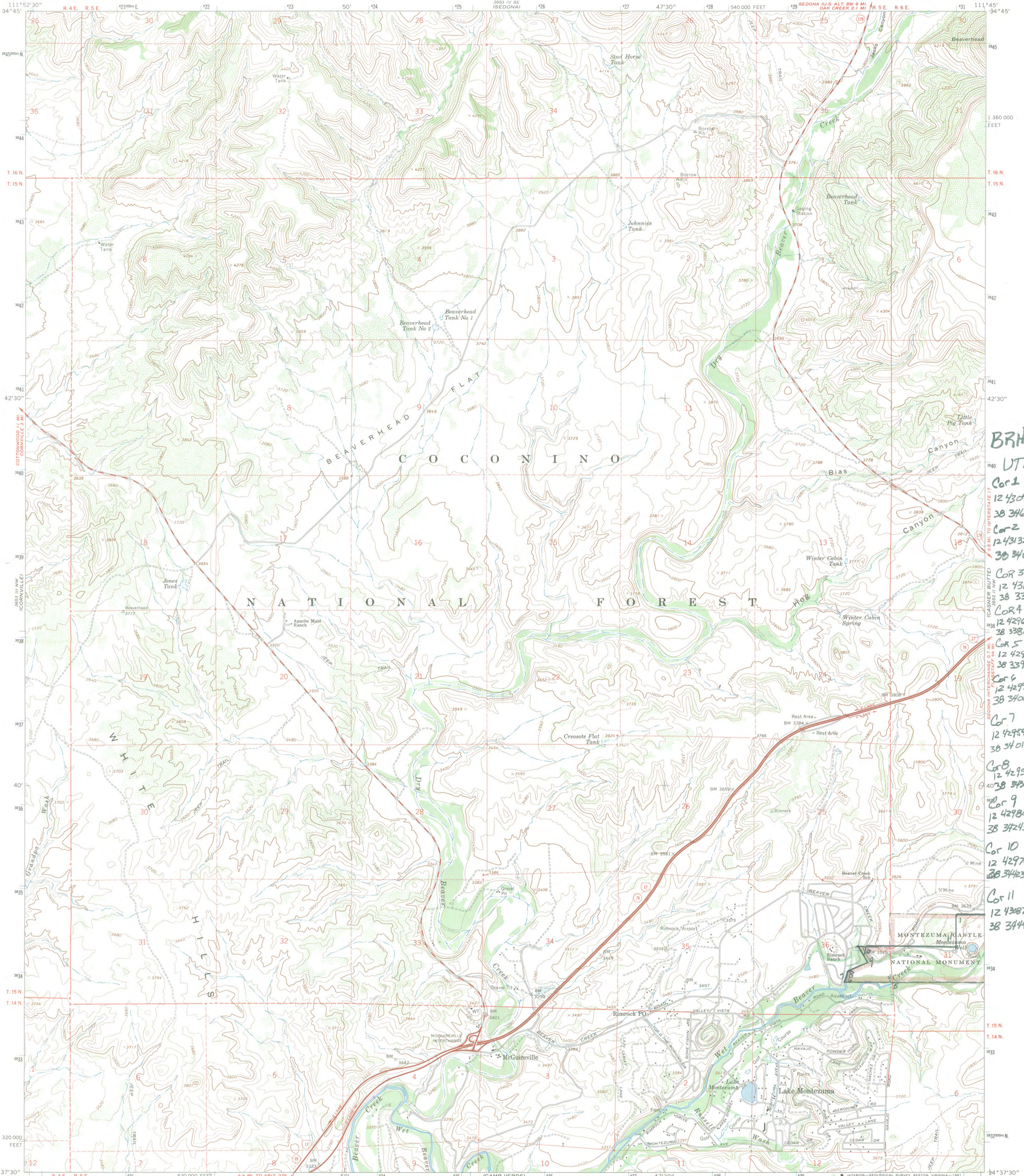
Az - Yavapai County - Back Ranch Historic District map



**Back Ranch Detailed Site Plan**

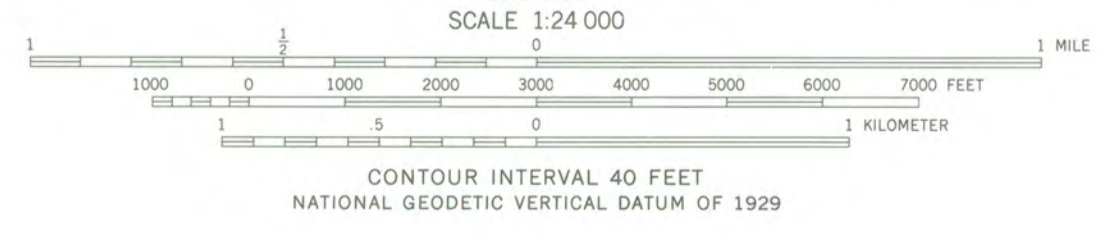
No Scale





**BRHD**  
UTM  
Cor 1  
12 43091 Easting  
38 34604 Northing  
Cor 2  
12 431324 Easting  
38 34594 Northing  
Cor 3  
12 431303 Easting  
38 33802 Northing  
Cor 4  
12 429600 Easting  
38 33815 Northing  
Cor 5  
12 429601 Easting  
38 33947 Northing  
Cor 6  
12 429925 Easting  
38 34009 Northing  
Cor 7  
12 429542 Easting  
38 34019 Northing  
Cor 8  
12 429574 Easting  
38 342136 Northing  
Cor 9  
12 429809 Easting  
38 34243 Northing  
Cor 10  
12 429707 Easting  
38 34423 Northing  
Cor 11  
12 430877 Easting  
38 34447 Northing

Mapped by the U. S. Forest Service  
Edited and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS, USC&GS and USFS  
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1962. Field checked by USGS 1969  
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum 10,000-foot grid based on Arizona coordinate system, central zone 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 12, shown in blue  
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983 move the projection lines 1 meter north and 65 meters east as shown by dashed corner ticks  
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map



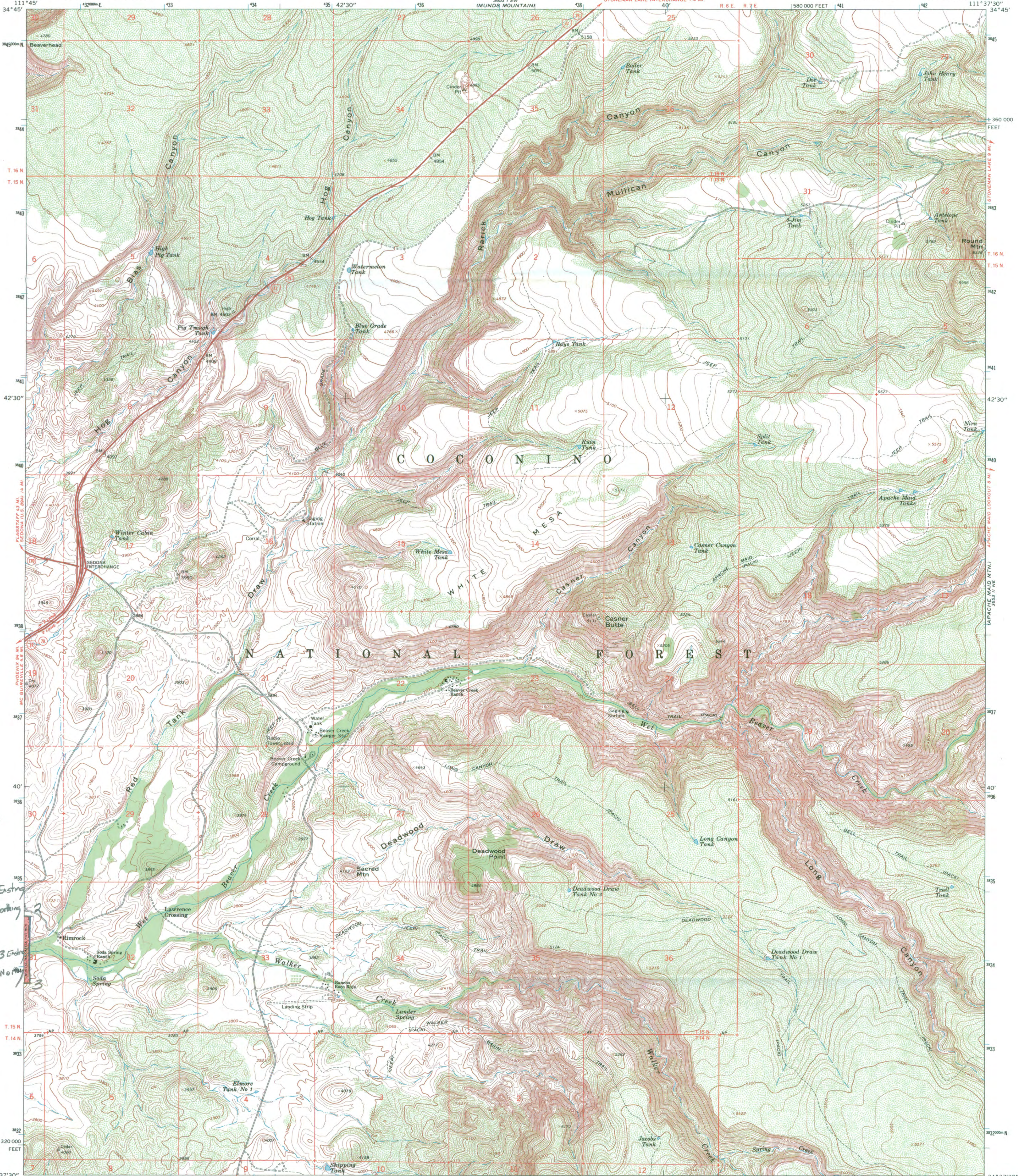
ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, all weather, hard surface	Light-duty road, all weather, improved surface
Secondary highway, all weather, hard surface	Unimproved road, fair or dry weather
Interstate Route	State Route



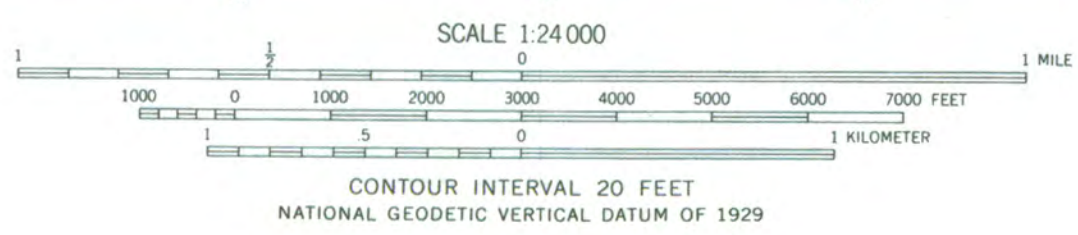
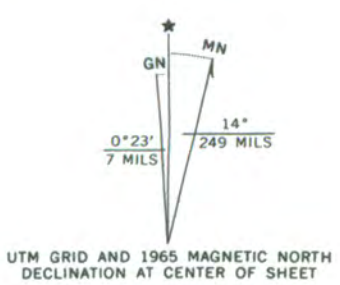
THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

BACK RANCH Historic District  
LAKE MONTEZUMA, ARIZONA 7½ minute Quad  
1 of 2



BRHD  
UTM  
C-2  
12 431324 Easting  
38 34594 Northing  
C-3  
12 431303 Easting  
38 33802 Northing

Mapped by the U. S. Forest Service  
Edited and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and USFS  
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial  
photographs taken 1962. Field checked by USGS 1965  
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Arizona coordinate system, central zone  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
zone 12, shown in blue  
Where omitted, land lines have not been established



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty	Light-duty
Unimproved dirt	
Interstate Route	State Route

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, P.O. BOX 25286, DENVER, COLORADO 80225  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

CASNER BUTTE, ARIZ.  
N3437.5—W11137.5/7.5

1965  
AMS 3653 II NW—SERIES V898



BACK RANCH Historic District  
CASNER Butte, ARIZONA 7½ Minute Quad  
2082

**OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE SENT VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL**



**United States Department of the Interior  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
INTERMOUNTAIN REGION  
History Program  
P.O. Box 728, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505-0728**



**NO HARD COPY TO FOLLOW**

December 18, 2012

To: Associate Director, Cultural Resources (WASO-3128)

Attention: Chief Historian, Park History (WASO-2261)

From: Regional Historian, Intermountain Regional Office

Subject: Approval of Additional Documentation for Back Ranch Historic District within Montezuma Well unit, Montezuma Castle National Monument, Arizona

The Intermountain Region has contracted for the completion of updated National Register of Historic Places nominations for the Back Ranch Historic District within Montezuma Well unit, Montezuma Castle National Monument, Arizona. The nomination has undergone park, regional and State Historic Preservation Office review. The nomination represents additional documentation which fully identifies and explains the Montezuma Well unit's significant cultural resources worthy of preservation.

I support the listing of the Back Ranch Historic District resources within Montezuma Well unit, Montezuma castle National Monument to the National Register of Historic Places.

Should you have any questions, please call me at 505-988-6770, or, Historian Sam Tamburro at 505-988-6847.

/s/ Robert L. Spude, Ph. D.



# United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20240



December 18, 2012

## Memorandum

To: Acting Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places

From: Deputy Federal Preservation Officer, National Park Service

Subject: Back Ranch Historic District, Montezuma Castle National Monument,  
Yavapai County, AZ

*Adrian A. Butler*  
12/18/2012

I am forwarding Additional Documentation for the resources of the Back Ranch Historic District in the Montezuma Well unit of Montezuma Castle National Monument. The Montezuma Well unit was added to the national monument in 1947, and the resources within it were administratively listed in the National Register in 1966. Additional documentation was completed for the prehistoric resources of the unit in 1978; this form provides information on the historic period resources. The Park History Program has reviewed the form and found the property eligible under Criteria A, and C, with areas of significance of Agriculture, Entertainment/Recreation, Exploration/Settlement, and Architecture.