

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

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This form is used for documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (National Register Bulletin 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information. For additional space, use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

☒ New Submission ☐ Amended Submission

### A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Animas Phase Sites in Hidalgo County, New Mexico

### B. Associated Historic Contexts

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

[REDACTED]

### C. Form Prepared by

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### D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature]  
Signature and title of certifying official

12-15-92  
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

[Signature]  
Signature of the Keeper

1-23-93  
Date of Action

Name of Property: Animas Phase Sites

County and State: Hidalgo, New Mexico

NPS Form 10-900-a OMB No. 1024-0018  
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### E. Statement of Historic Context

This multiple-property National Register nomination is entitled "Animas phase sites of Southern Hidalgo County, New Mexico." Accompanying this nomination are nomination forms for 25 sites that [REDACTED] and are assigned to the Animas phase (a pueblo occupation), which has been dated between A.D. 1200 and 1350, although most of the sites have earlier and later components. These dates are based on ceramic types from dated contexts at sites in adjacent culture areas and on a few dates from Animas sites.

The sites as a group represent the Animas phase occupation of [REDACTED] (Figure 1). The Animas phase appears to be related to an extensive, highly developed [REDACTED] culture centered at [REDACTED]. Few Animas phase sites have been excavated to a limited extent; those have yielded important archaeological data but have not answered all of the questions concerning the prehistory of the area.

#### Potential Kinds of Data

##### *Architecture*

Intrasite patterning of Animas phase architecture varies from rooms organized around plazas to small, isolated field houses. In nearby culture areas, contemporaneous sites tend to be small room blocks during the earlier occupation and large room blocks surrounding enclosed plazas during the later occupation. In the Animas area, temporal control is not good enough to determine the factors that controlled site configuration. Large multiroom pueblos with compounds were constructed of adobe with some cobbles incorporated into the foundation. Pueblos were generally U shaped or entirely enclosed a plaza.

Smaller villages or hamlets have contiguous and/or noncontiguous rooms with cobble foundations. Isolated field houses are cobblestone foundations that supported jacal or wattle-and-daub superstructures.

Up to 250 rooms may be present at some of the larger pueblos. Mound relief and the types of cobble foundations indicate that most of the structures were probably a single story in height, although multistoried buildings are common in that part of the American Southwest and at Casas Grandes. At some of the larger sites, plazas are incorporated into the village plan, and possible ball courts, a common feature of Casas Grandes sites, have been recorded. A possible reservoir was noted at one large site, and small water-control features may exist. The density of the artifact scatters and trash on the sites is highly variable.

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Architectural style has the potential to yield cultural information and potentially to allow definition of a separate Salado phase in this area. Room size and configuration and internal and external space allocation (use areas) have the potential to yield social information on the inhabitants.

### *Artifacts*

One of the primary diagnostic ceramic wares associated with sites of the Animas phase is Cloverdale Corrugated. Also commonly found on these sites is a series of Chihuahua (Casas Grandes) wares, including the Playas Red series, Ramos Polychrome, Babicora Polychrome, and Villa Ahumada Polychrome. (Playas Red and Playas Red Incised may be local variants of Casas Grandes wares.) El Paso Polychrome and Chupadero Black-on-white from the south-central New Mexico area are also common types associated with these sites.

Other wares found on some of these sites suggest that multiple occupations occurred, both earlier than and later than the Animas occupation (approximately A.D. 1200 to 1350). Earlier wares include Mimbres Black-on-white, which is associated with the earlier San Luis and Mimbres phases. Later ceramics are Gila Polychrome and Tucson Polychrome, which may indicate a Salado reoccupation of some sites or the continued occupation of these sites into the latter half of the fourteenth century. Plain wares, unnamed corrugated wares, and red wares are also common during all three occupations.

In addition to the architectural features and associated artifact scatters and trash deposits of the Animas phase, sites include low-density lithic artifact scatters of uncertain age. These lithic scatters lack temporally diagnostic artifacts and merge with ceramic scatters on the sites. Clear boundaries could not be defined that delimited materials only of the Animas phase, and it is possible that the lithic scatters may have some pertinence to the Animas phase occupations of these sites. Further evidence of mixing is indicated by pithouses, possible surface structures, and ceramic scatters of earlier components that are overlain or mixed with features and artifacts of the Animas and possibly the Salado phases.

Chipped stone implements and debris were made from cherts, chalcedony, rhyolite, and obsidian, all apparently locally available. Several chalcedony outcrops were recorded [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Obsidian from this source occurs on many Animas phase sites and has been successfully dated (DeAtley 1980:74-80). Chipped stone tools include projectile points, scrapers, drills, and bifaces. Turquoise, which may have come from [REDACTED], has also been found on some of these sites. Ground stone includes manos, metates, mortars, and pestles made of basalt, welded tuff, and granitic materials.

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### *Other Remains*

All of the sites have the potential to yield archaeological samples that would provide additional information on the prehistoric occupation, on the temporal affiliation, and the cultural ties to other areas in the American Southwest and northern Mexico, etc. Specifically, many of the sites provide evidence of charcoal in exposed deposits and darkened soils. These could provide radiocarbon dates and charred plant parts to indicate past climate, diet, and possibly resources that were traded. Most of the interior architectural features have the potential for preserved hearths, which were often elaborately prepared in Animas and Salado phase houses. These can provide archaeomagnetic dates, as demonstrated by recent dates derived from the Joyce Well Site. Other types of samples, such as obsidian, turquoise, possibly parrot bones or feathers, copper bells, etc., provide the important link to the Casas Grandes culture and demonstrate resource procurement areas and trade networks, as DiPeso (1974) postulated for much of the American Southwest.

Burials have been excavated from Animas phase habitation sites; these have the potential to yield information on burial practices, nutrition and disease, population characteristics, and other subjects.

### *Previous Work*

A number of earlier cultural resource inventories have been conducted in the Animas area. The earliest of these inventories were undertaken in the 1920s and 1930s by C. Sauer and Donald D. Brand (1930), Brand (1943), Alfred V. Kidder and H. S. and C. B. Cosgrove (1949), and E. B. Sayles (1933). Herbert Yeo (1930) visited the Pendleton Ruin and other sites in the area. Extensive reconnaissance studies provide minimal descriptive and locational information on the larger sites of the area. In 1960, Richard Ambler surveyed caves and open sites [REDACTED] (Lambert and Ambler 1961). Only one of the sites reported by Ambler is included in this nomination. In 1961, Eugene B. McCluney (1962) undertook an informal reconnaissance survey of three of [REDACTED] [REDACTED] for the School of American Research. He visited a number of small and large sites [REDACTED] and gives some indication of the variability in site attributes for the Animas phase. Between 1974 and 1976, Frank B. Findlow and Susan P. DeAtley (DeAtley 1980; DeAtley and Findlow 1982; Findlow and DeAtley 1978), then of the University of California at Los Angeles, intensively surveyed [REDACTED] and recorded well over 100 sites. They described some of the larger sites, collected artifacts for some of the sites, and made the approximate locations of the sites available to the archaeological community.

A. V. Kidder and the Cosgroves conducted the first scientific excavations in the Animas area (LeBlanc 1980). As a result of Kidder's earlier and Carey's (1931) survey in the [REDACTED] to the

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[REDACTED] Kidder was interested in the Pendleton Ruin as a possible Casas Grandes outpost. Kidder and H. S. and C. B. Cosgrove (1949) excavated the ruin in 1933 for the Carnegie Institute of the Peabody Museum. Based on this work, because they felt certain Casas Grandes traits were missing from the site, they coined the phase designation "Animas." They excavated 100 to 125 rooms at the site, although not the entire site. By cross-dating the ceramics, they dated the site to the middle-to-late A.D. 1300s. Limited survey of the area indicated the presence of more Animas phase sites, located near mouths of drainages—either where small arroyos joined larger ones or where large drainages flowed into valley bottoms. They also found possible evidence for dams—rows of rocks along terraces—designed to trap sheet-wash.

Five sites have been excavated in the area Table 1. In 1962, E. B. McCluney (1962) excavated two sites for the School of American Research. He excavated 11 rooms of about 20 in the Clanton Draw Site (LA 4979) and 57 rooms of about 350 at the Box Canyon Site (LA 7980). He found the architecture and ceramics of these two sites to be very similar to those on the Pendleton Site. McCluney (n.d.) also excavated a portion of Joyce Well (Site LA 11823) the following year.

Table 1. Number of excavated rooms on Animas phase sites.

Site No.	Name	Estimated	No. Rooms
		No. Rooms	Excavated
LA 1369	Pendleton Ruin	?	100-125
LA 4979	Clanton Draw Site	20	11
LA 4980	Box Canyon Site	350	57
LA 11823	Joyce Well Site	450	45

McCluney dated the Box Canyon Site as later and suggested that Chihuahuan trade wares ceased to be made during the occupation. He also noted trade wares, such as Gila Polychrome, that elsewhere in the Southwest indicate a Salado occupation.

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In 1963 McCluney (n.d.) excavated 45 rooms of about 50 at the Joyce Well Site. Numerous burials were excavated, and a variety of ceramics were analyzed. McCluney is, as of January 1992, completing his report on these excavations.

In 1972, James Fitting (1973) excavated a small site, the CF Spring Site (not included here).

Most recently, Frank Findlow conducted limited excavation in conjunction with extensive, systematic survey, with a focus on settlement patterns and catchment areas (Findlow 1979; Findlow and DeAtley 1976). He proposed a San Luis phase, which apparently equates with both the Late Pithouse period and the Mimbres period found elsewhere in Southwestern New Mexico. The San Luis phases ends at A.D. 1150, with the beginning of the Animas phase, which is dated A.D. 1150 to 1350. DeAtley (1980), in her dissertation, incorporates some of the results of Findlow's fieldwork and summarizes the known dates from the Animas.

### Culture History

Virtually all of [REDACTED] is undersurveyed (Stuart and Gauthier 1981:224), because of the limited amount of public land and the sparse population. What is known of the prehistory of the area is derived from better-surveyed areas, [REDACTED] and from a few large sites excavated during the last 50 years.

A detailed culture history is presented here because many of the sites in this nomination are multicomponent (Table 2). Some represent not only an Animas phase occupation, but either a San Luis phase or earlier occupation and/or a later, Salado phase occupation. The sites have the potential to yield archaeological data to answer specific research questions concerning the Animas phase. They also have the potential to yield data for understanding culture change and population replacement from the Archaic through the San Luis or pre-Animas occupation, to the Animas occupation, and through a possible, later Salado occupation of Southwestern New Mexico.

*Paleoindian (10,000 B.C. or earlier to about 7000 B.C.)*

The Paleoindian occupation of the American Southwest is known from a limited number of excavated sites and an extensive distribution of distinctive spear points. Two Paleoindian sites located in southeastern Arizona, the Lehner Kill Site and the Naco Site, provide information on the earliest,

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or Clovis culture (9000 or 9500 B.C.) in the area. Clovis appears to have been a hunting adaptation to large game animals extant at the end of the last glaciation and is known solely on projectile points, scrapers, and other tools and occasional bones at kill sites. Folsom points (8800-7300 B.C.) at two sites in Western New Mexico indicate bison hunting. Following the Folsom, Paleoindian remains are less well documented. As the climate became drier and the extant grasslands were restricted gradually toward the east, Paleoindian hunters either migrated with the bison or adapted to new quarry and to plant remains.

*Archaic (7000 B.C. to A.D. 200)*

The Archaic occupation of [REDACTED] falls within the Cochise Archaic, as defined by Sayles and Antevs (1941) and revised by Whalen (1971). A few early radiocarbon dates indicate the Archaic may have started with the Sulphur Spring phase at 7000 B.C. The Chiricahua phase followed, starting at B.C. 3500; the San Pedro, at B.C. 1500. The long-lived Archaic occupation shows a steady cultural progression. Early remains indicate a small hunting and gathering population that exploited resources on probably a fairly extensive seasonal round. Late Archaic remains show changes to a semisedentary population living in probably ephemeral pithouses (as well as rock shelters) (LeBlanc and Whalen 1980:86-87). These later groups incorporated agricultural products such as maize, beans, and squash into a diet of collected plant resources such as mesquite and agave (LeBlanc and Whalen 1980:77-85). The evidence indicates an insitu development to the Mogollon in Southwestern New Mexico by about A.D. 200.

*The Pithouse Period of the Mogollon (A.D. 200 to ca. 1000)*

The Pithouse period of the Mogollon is widely distributed throughout southwestern New Mexico and southeastern Arizona. It is divided into the Early Pithouse period and the Late Pithouse period, based on architectural features and site locations. The archaeological manifestations are best known from sites north of Hidalgo County.

The Early Pithouse period is the first fully sedentary occupation in the area, dating to approximately A.D. 200 to 500-550. Sites are generally located on knolls, mesas, and high ridges (LeBlanc and Whalen 1980:112), where these occur within river valleys with access to agricultural land. The sites possibly needed to be defended (LeBlanc and Whalen 1980:125-128). The structures were round pithouses clustered in small villages. Large pithouses or communal structures were common. The pottery was generally plain with some red ware.

Findlow and DeAtley failed to find Early Pithouse material [REDACTED] (Findlow 1979). Possible explanations are that the material does not exist within the valley, that those land forms do not occur within the valley, or that high land forms were not surveyed.

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Following A.D. 500-550, the Late Pithouse period is commonly divided into three phases within the well-studied [REDACTED]. In the Animas area, Findlow lumped the Late Pithouse period with the Mimbres or Early Pueblo period, referring to it as the San Luis phase. One of the most marked changes from the Early to Late Pithouse is the change in village location. Late Pithouse villages are located on river terraces and low ridges within river valleys. The architecture during the Late Pithouse period evolved from round to rectangular and semisubterranean pithouses with ramp entrances. Both villages and communal structures got larger, indicating population increase. Grave goods were frequently placed with burials. During this period, the types of trade goods increased.

The end of the Pithouse period is marked by the development of the Classic Mimbres about circa A.D. 1000.

*The Early Pueblo (ca. A.D. 1000 to 1130-1150)*

The Classic Mimbres is defined and best studied in [REDACTED], but Mimbres architecture and ceramics are widely distributed throughout Southern New Mexico. The Late Pithouse is included within Findlow's San Luis phase.

The Classic Mimbres reflects a population increase from the Pithouse period. Occupation of major river valleys continued, with the population spreading to secondary drainages and to lower elevations (LeBlanc and Whalen 1980:113). The Classic Mimbres is marked by masonry surface dwellings in blocks of rooms, a general lack of kivas, Mimbres Black-on-white pottery, and evidence of irrigation. The Mimbrenos disappeared abruptly about A.D. 1130-1150.

Large Mimbres settlements occur in the same locations as Late Pithouse period villages. Medium-sized villages of 10-20 rooms are located between the large villages and on secondary drainages. Small sites of 10 rooms or less are assumed to be seasonal farms. The architecture is above-ground, masonry structures of contiguous living rooms with separate storage rooms. Entry was apparently through the roof. Burials occur within the rooms, and the head of each flexed burial was covered by a single black-on-white pot with a kill hole. Little material continuity is evident between the Classic Mimbres and the Animas phase (LeBlanc and Whalen 1980:268).

*Animas Phase (circa A.D. 1200 to 1350)*

Kidder, Cosgrove, and Cosgrove (1949) first excavated at the Pendleton Site to define whether the Animas phase in Hidalgo County represented Casas Grandes culture or not (LeBlanc and Whalen 1980:272). They concluded that the sites had the features reported for Casas Grandes. McCluney, who



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excavated at the Clanton Draw and Box Canyons sites (McCluney 1962) and at the Joyce Well Site (McCluney n.d.), believed that the Animas people provided a trade link between Casas Grandes and the Hohokam (LeBlanc and Whalen 1980:275). Findlow (Findlow and DeAtley 1976, 1978; Findlow 1979) conducted extensive survey in the county to further define the tie to Casas Grandes and to study land use and resource catchments.

The Animas phase appears to be part of a more widespread occupation of Southern New Mexico and northern Mexico (Schaafsma 1979) and possibly western Arizona (Lekson 1987). Schaafsma's (1979) view is that "the area is one geographically heterogeneous interacting group either heavily influenced by or centered in Casas Grandes" (Stuart and Gauthier 1981:206). In the New Mexico Bootheel the occupation is called the Animas phase; in the Mimbres Valley to the north, the Black Mountain phase; in south-central New Mexico, along the lower reaches of the Rio Grande, the El Paso phase. DiPeso (1974) views the sites in these three areas as outposts of Casas Grandes or Paquimé, a very large trade center in Chihuahua, Mexico. LeBlanc (in LeBlanc and Whalen 1980), in his summary of data on the Animas and the Black Mountain areas, believes that the differences between Casas Grandes and the Animas area, and between the Animas area and the Black Mountain area, are differences of degrees. "Thus, it appears that the initial distinction between Animas and Casas Grandes is not substantiated in light of recent data" (LeBlanc and Whalen 1980:293).

The archaeological data referred to is based on reported excavations at only five sites, four of which are included in this nomination: the Pendleton Ruin (LA 1369), the Clanton Draw Site (LA 4979), the Box Canyon Site (LA 4980), the Joyce Well Site (LA 11823), and the CP Spring Site (see Table 1).

Site location changed between the Classic Mimbres and the Animas/Black Mountain—sites are generally located in desert areas such as the Animas Valley. This could reflect a difference in subsistence patterns (LeBlanc and Whalen 1980:268). The architecture of Animas phase sites, also different, consists of one or more room blocks of puddled adobe. The room blocks are generally U-shaped or enclosed around a plaza. The rooms are larger than Mimbres rooms. Floors and walls are plastered. Hearths are small, circular, and adobe lined. The treatment of burials varies, but they are generally below floors in rooms. Ceramics include Cloverdale Corrugated (red-slipped), brown wares (which make up 50-95% of the assemblage), Playas Red, Ramos Black and other Casas Grandes types, El Paso Polychrome, Chupadero Black-on-white, Three Rivers Red-on-terracotta, and Tucson, Gila, and Tonto Polychrome. Ramos Polychrome may be locally made at the Joyce Well site, and Playas Red may be local to the Black Mountain phase, based on evidence from the Walsh Site (LeBlanc and Whalen 1980:282).

DiPeso (1974) suggested that Casas Grandes during this time served as a center for a trade system between Mesoamerican and the greater Southwest. Certainly macaws, turquoise, shell, copper, and pottery were involved, as well as possibly foodstuffs. To implement the trade system within the

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Casas Grandes area, sites were apparently functionally hierarchical (LeBlanc and Whalen 1980:285). This system may have extended into the Animas area, although no large trade centers such as Paquimé exist in New Mexico. Secondary ceremonial or commercial centers do exist; the Timberlake Site (LA 54038) and the Marck Site (not in this nomination) may together form such a center (Stuart and Gauthier 1981). Clusters of Animas and Black Mountain phase sites may also represent the second level of the hierarchy (LeBlanc and Whalen 1980:285-86). Clusters of 3 to 4 sites representing several hundred rooms within circa 8 sq km (3 sq mi) are distributed throughout the lowlands of southwestern New Mexico, [REDACTED]

In her doctoral research, DeAtley (1980) found that three sites showed evidence of communication with Casas Grandes: the Maddox Ranch Site (LA 498), located far enough north to communication with other southwest groups; the Timberlake Ruin (LA 54038) [REDACTED] and the Culberson Ruin (LA 31050), near Antelope Well obsidian. Otherwise,

The region was self-sufficient, and seemed to receive minimal support from the core group....The lack of centralization in the integration suggests that Casas Grandes had no direct role in the frontier organization. Rather, it appears that expansion into the area occurred as an indirect result of events in the core area, and that communities developed their own general mechanism to survive without support from Casas Grande....the frontier settlements were not fully integrated into the Casas Grandes system as a unit, and that only a few of the villages formally participated in the Casas Grandes exchange network. [DeAtley 1980:157-158]

Although closely tied to Casas Grandes, Animas phase sites were, based on ceramics, occupied after Casas Grandes fell. However, dating of the Animas phase is being revised, as DiPeso's dates are calibrated with more recent data. In the Animas area of Hidalgo County, there appears to be no discontinuity of occupation into the Salado occupation. Likewise, in the Cliff area, "comprehensive stylistic change did not occur at any point in the Mimbres Valley sequence; therefore, we cannot accept without qualification the idea that population displacement occurred [Nelson and LeBlanc 1986:247]."

Since few Animas phase sites have been excavated in either [REDACTED] several important questions about the Animas phase occupation of the area remain unanswered. These form the basis of the research questions that determine the significance for the sites in this nomination.

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### *Salado Phase (circa A.D. 1350 to 1450)*

The Salado phase is the most poorly understood of the occupations of Southwestern New Mexico. Only two sites with Salado occupations, both included in this nomination, have been excavated in the area (Stuart and Gauthier 1981:209). Excavation at these sites—the Pendleton Ruin (Kidder, Cosgrove, and Cosgrove 1949) and the Box Canyon Site (McCluney 1962)—did not provide adequate chronological information from mixed deposits. Therefore, beginning and ending dates are only speculative, based on evidence of Salado occupation [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] the Salado is known as the Cliff phase (LeBlanc and Whalen 1980:297). The Cliff phase sites appear to represent a conglomeration of population during A.D. 1375-1450 (based on pottery), with one radiocarbon date from the area of A.D. 1425 ± 60 (LeBlanc and Whalen 1980:309). Many Salado sites [REDACTED] are single-component sites representing new site locations, whereas sites in this nomination have Salado ceramics that may represent Salado components either mixed with or superimposed over Animas occupations (LeBlanc and Whalen 1981:304). Nelson and LeBlanc (1986:249-250) found the Cliff phase represented short-term occupation at numerous sites in [REDACTED] which led them to suggest that large populations were moving frequently and reusing fields and ditches of an earlier occupation.

Architecture on Salado sites is discrete room blocks surrounded by compound walls. The compounds also lack ceremonial rooms. Remaining adobe mounds on Cliff phase sites suggest that the room blocks might have been multistory (LeBlanc and Whalen 1980:301). Rooms are large, with no apparent storage rooms. LeBlanc (in LeBlanc and Whalen 1980:312-313) mentions that large El Paso Brown ware jars are found on Salado phase sites, suggesting that these large jars were imported for storage. Nelson and LeBlanc (1980) note that "the [architectural] remains of the Black Mountain phase are very similar to those of the Cliff phase" (p. 12). Salado sites lack architectural planning on the individual room level.

Furthermore, during the Salado, "There is argued to be a strong dependence on corn agriculture. All of the sites described are near substantial watercourses, though no irrigation systems are described for New Mexico. The reliance on deer as a faunal resource was pronounced and perhaps, as elsewhere, the production of cotton blankets was characteristic" (Stuart and Gauthier 1981:209). Cotton is today still a commercial crop in [REDACTED]. In the Cliff area, remains indicate a higher reliance on wild deer and bear, suggesting a lower population density (LeBlanc and Whalen 1980:310).

Salado sites [REDACTED] appear to have been abandoned rapidly (LeBlanc and Whalen 1980:304). No evidence of Salado or Cliff occupations dating after A.D. 1450 have been found elsewhere in Southwestern New Mexico. Occupation of sites in the area ceases at this time.

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In New Mexico, Salado sites are recognized by Gila Polychrome, which is found on all Salado sites across southwestern New Mexico and southeastern Arizona, and the lack of Casas Grandes ceramics. Gila Polychrome found [REDACTED] may be produced locally [LeBlanc and Whalen 1980:303]. Other polychromes are Tonto and Pinto Polychromes. Few sites contain Tularosa Black-on-white. Predominantly, ceramics are unpainted with textured exteriors. Small amounts of Ramos Polychrome from Casas Grandes, El Paso Polychrome and Chupadero Black-on-white from east of the Rio Grande, and Zuni Glaze ware also appear on the sites.

As with the Animas, few Salado sites have been excavated in Southwestern New Mexico. Therefore, important questions concerning the Salado occupation remain unanswered. The Salado remains on the sites [REDACTED] have the potential to provide information on some of these questions. \*

**Research Questions**

Animas-phase sites in Hidalgo County have the potential to provide a wealth of surface and subsurface archaeological remains that pertain to the prehistoric occupants of the area. These questions pertain to the level of knowledge about the archaeology of the area today. Additionally, the sites, if preserved, have the potential to yield archaeological data to answer research questions that are not perceived today but may be important to future generations of scholars.

Sites include aceramic lithic scatters that may represent Archaic use of the area or special functions associated with the later, ceramic occupations. Some have earlier Late Pithouse components and evidence of a Mimbres occupation. All contain Cloverdale Corrugated and architectural features that appear to date to the Animas phase. At least ten sites have later Salado ceramics, possibly indicating full-blown Salado components at the sites. A few of the sites contain both pre-Animas and potentially post-Animas assemblages and the potential to yield data important to chronological and culture change studies over almost 500 years of occupation.

Animas-phase habitation sites include artifacts, architectural features, hearths or fire-cracked rock features, and possibly burials. These remains provide important data for studying the following general research questions. Additionally, the sites contain buried remains for any number of additional areas of research.

1. *What defines the Animas phase in Hidalgo County? Who were the Animas people and what was their origin?* The question has not been answered as to who the Animas people were, migrants from Casas Grandes, migrants from the Jornada Mogollon area of south-central New Mexico, or migrants from either area who incorporated the Mimbrenos. DeAtley (1980) has

\* See addendum, page 24.

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suggested that development was independent of Casas Grandes, possibly ruling out the first alternative. The cultural discontinuity between the Mimbres and the Animas phase has not been adequately explained. Many of the sites have the potential to yield early archaeological remains, such as skeleton data, ceramics, architectural features, etc., to address this question. Remains from Animas phase sites can be compared to extensive Casas Grandes materials and to materials from other culture areas. These data can be used to further define the Animas Culture area its relationship to the Casas Grandes culture area.

2. *Was the area abandoned by the Animas phase occupants, and when?* Some researchers (LeBlanc and Whalen 1980:290) believe that, in Hidalgo County, there was no temporal discontinuity from the Animas phase occupation to the Salado occupation. Architectural and ceramic data have not been sufficient to identify a Salado occupation that post-dates the Animas and to determine whether the later occupation provides cultural continuity from the earlier or replacement of ideas or people after the fall of Casas Grandes. The sites in this nomination have the potential to provide both chronometric dates and architectural building sequences, as well as cultural data, to address this question.
3. *What is the chronology of the Animas phase in the New Mexico Bootheel?* Most of the dating of Animas sites in New Mexico is based on ceramics, because much of the work was done before either radiocarbon or archaeomagnetic dating techniques were perfected. DeAtley (1980) reviews the existing radiocarbon, tree-ring, and obsidian hydration dates for Animas phase sites, placing occupation from A.D. 1200 to about 1425. However, she has only a few dates from each site. Recent archaeomagnetic dates from three hearths in previously excavated rooms at the Joyce Well Site indicate that such data are available in the remains on the architectural sites in the area. Obsidian artifacts made from the Antelope Wells obsidian can easily be sourced and dated.

Reliable dates are also important for the Casas Grandes site of Paquimé, which burned in A.D. 1340 (DiPeso 1974). Ravesloot, Dean, and Foster (1986), after reviewing DiPeso's dates, argue that the florescent occupation of that site dates to between A.D. 1300 and 1450, later than suggested by DiPeso.

The sites in this nomination, even those that have been excavated or vandalized, have the potential to yield chronometric data to better date the sites. Such data include charcoal for radiocarbon dates, archaeomagnetic dates from hearths, and obsidian hydration dates on Antelope Wells obsidian. Better dating of individual sites is needed to determine relationships among the sites and between them and Paquimé. Additionally, dating can determine whether the sites are contemporaneous or were used successively during the occupation.

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4. *What were the functions of the sites in the nomination? What does site function indicate about intersite relationships?* Accurate determination of intersite relations (between small sites and larger sites, between lowland sites near agricultural fields and other sites) depends partly on accurate determination of site function. Architectural types (including room block arrangement, room size, and artifacts that indicate room function) and artifact types (including locally produced materials versus imported materials) help indicate site function. They can be used to determine whether a site is a temporary or permanent habitation or a center for trade, political influence, or religion.
5. *What was the function of the sites within the regional system that included Casas Grandes and possibly much of the American Southwest.* Whether or not Animas phase sites are similar to Casas Grandes or not has been consistently of interest to archaeologists. More important than defining boundaries of the cultural areas is understanding the nature of the relationships among sites within an area. Study of site location and function within the Animas phase will help explain site function within the Casas Grande system, as proposed by DiPeso (1974), LeBlanc and Whalen (1980:284-287), and DeAtley (1980:156-159). Also, the Casas Grandes site of Paquimé served as a redistribution site for trade materials from Mesoamerica. Study of a series of Animas phase sites and the variety of artifacts that they include may yield more information on the redistribution system on a local basis. Material culture will show the influence of Mesoamerican culture on the American Southwest.
7. *What were the prehistoric lifeways of the Animas peoples?* Limited excavations have provided information on the daily life of the Animas peoples. These data can be supplemented by excavation data from major village sites and smaller hamlets to provide a view of the farming and hunting techniques, household utilities, clothing and decoration, sanitation, cooking, manufacturing techniques, etc., that indicate the daily lives of prehistoric peoples. The arrangements, manufacture, and decoration of these remains provides social information of the common practices.

Environment

The 1984 Animas survey area encompasses about 3,840 sq km (1,500 sq mi) of southwestern New Mexico, an area bordered by Arizona on the west and the Republic of Mexico to the south and east. Within this area are three north-south trending mountain ranges and two intermontane basin systems.



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[REDACTED]

Annual rainfall ranges from about 41 cm (16 in.) [REDACTED] in the west to as little as about 23 cm (9 in.) in [REDACTED] east. Most of the precipitation occurs as thunderstorms between July and October.

Vegetation of [REDACTED] is mixed: juniper and oak have some importance in the north, and leaf and stem succulents are noticeably more abundant in the south. The vegetation of [REDACTED] is xerophytic and dominated by sotol, ocotillo, mesquite, and various cacti. [REDACTED] generally have a good cover of short grasses, but [REDACTED] varies from some areas with good grass cover to areas of mesquite or creosotebush, which characterize the basin. Animas-phase sites with structural remains are located on or near the piedmont slopes or *bajadas* of the three mountain systems or along major drainages that knife into the basin floors.

Site location is patterned, in part, with the distribution of arable land (Table 3). However, the more important variable conditioning site location is water (including rainfall, runoff, and springs). Precipitation decreases from the west to the east, and the number and density of sites also decrease in the same direction.

The area is fairly remote, and most of it has limited access and is under the private ownership of several large ranches and land companies. There are no communities within the area—the small [REDACTED] are more than 24 km (15 mi) north of the northernmost sites included in this nomination. No major highways pass through the area, and there are only two paved state routes that enter and terminate within each of the two basin systems. There are, however, a number of all-weather gravel and caliche roads that traverse the area. The presence of the rugged mountain systems, the lack of roads to the east and west of the basins, and the Mexican border to the south limit access to the area and discourage travel within the basins. Ranchers and land companies also discourage travel within the region and on their land or lease lands. At present the land is used principally for cattle grazing and some hunting. The only major industrial development in the area is a railroad spur and copper refinery operated by [REDACTED]

Pages E15, Figure 1, Table 2, and Table 4 contain restricted information and are not included in this document.



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### **F. Associated Property Types**

#### **Description**

Animas-phase habitation sites include sites of different sizes, but all have some indication of architectural features and a temporal indicator, Cloverdale Corrugated. Until further research is conducted on Animas phase sites in Hidalgo County, these two criteria describe the sites.

Large, multiroom pueblos with compounds were constructed of adobe with some cobbles incorporated into the foundation. Adobe compounds remain today as above-ground mounds, some up to 1 m high. Depressions in the mounds and evidence from past excavations provide indications of plazas and pueblo shape.

Smaller villages or hamlets have cobble outlines indicating foundations of contiguous and/or noncontiguous rooms. Isolated field houses are likely represented by cobblestone foundation that supported jacal or wattle-and-daub superstructures.

Artifact assemblages on the sites include ceramics and flaked and ground stone lithics. Trade-ware ceramics indicate contemporaneous connections with the Casas Grandes culture and groups in southern New Mexico and eastern Arizona. Until further excavation and dating are conducted on ceramics from Animas phase sites, Cloverdale Corrugated provides a temporal indicator of this occupation.

Temporally diagnostic ceramic types are not limited to Animas phase ceramics. Most of the sites are multicomponent; some include earlier pithouses and Early Mogollon ceramics, and some have ceramics that date after the end of the Animas phase around A.D. 1350. While the Early Mogollon and Mimbres occupation of Southwestern New Mexico is well-documented; the post-Animas occupation or the influence of the Salado is not as well known.

#### **Significance**

The 25 sites in the Animas Phase Sites nomination are important for the following reasons:

1. They appear to contain data to allow archaeologists to understand the relationship between the American Southwest and Mesoamerican cultures of A.D. 1200 through 1450.
2. They are important for understanding not only the Animas phase occupation, but the preceding Mogollon and the succeeding Salado period occupations.

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3. They contain well-preserved architectural and cultural remains, frequently in above-ground mounds; the remains of adobe and cobble architecture; and the potential for buried stratified remains. Therefore, their research potential is excellent.
4. The sites, to date, have not suffered extensive damage from bulldozing, but need the protection offered by the National Register System.
5. These sites have interpretive value. The sites "are of unparalleled importance for understanding and interpreting to the public the prehistoric relationships between Mesoamerica and the American Southwest" (Schaafsma 1987:8).

**Register Requirements**

All of the sites in this multiple-property nomination are eligible to the National Register under criterion (d), their potential to answer specific archaeological research questions and many other types of research. Limited archaeological research at these sites has shown that the archaeological data potential for the area is generally very good. The sites have the potential to yield *architectural* data, including structure shape, estimated room size and function, estimated population, and method of manufacture, as well as construction chronology and changes in shape and function through time. The sites also have the potential to yield surface and subsurface *artifacts* to determine dates of occupation, cultural affiliation, site function, activity areas, and numerous other areas of research. The few sites that have been excavated have yielded extensive artifact and tool assemblages, architectural data, and burials. Archaeomagnetic dates taken from previously excavated rooms at the Joyce Well Site demonstrate the chronological potential of that site. Most of the sites have been extensively surface collected by vandals and archaeologists. Therefore, the information available from surface collections is limited and biased by the previous collections of painted ceramics, ground and chipped stone tools, and ornaments. This should not, however, seriously affect the research potential of subsurface deposits on the sites.

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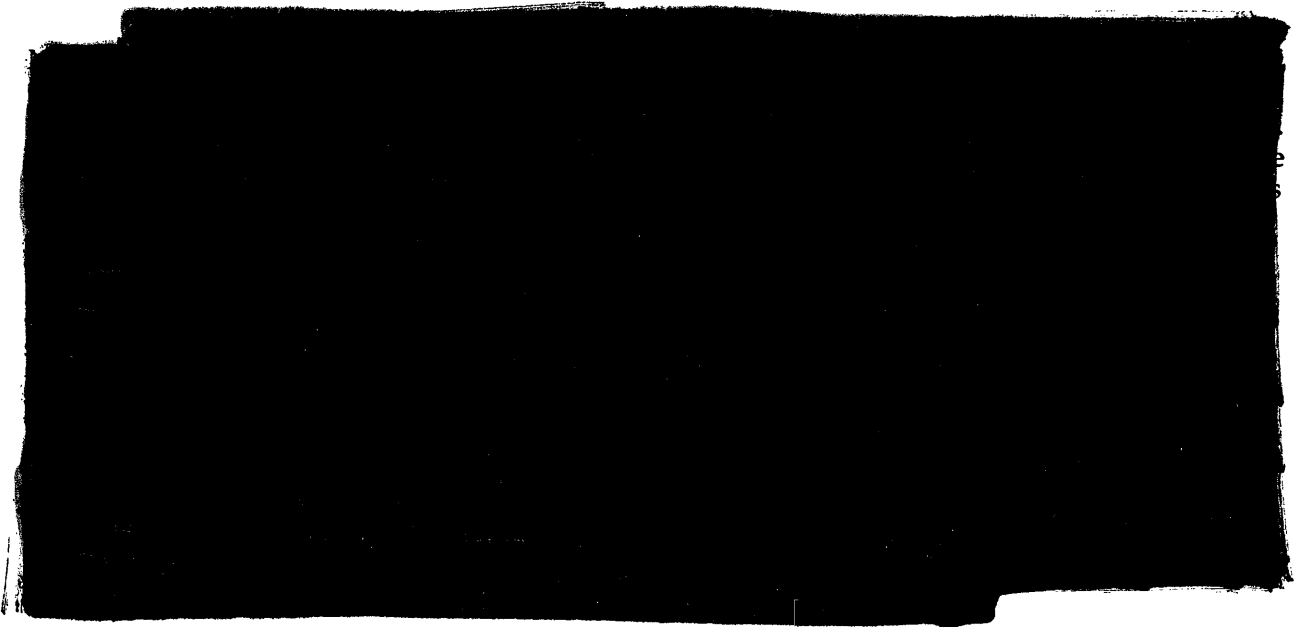
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### G. Geographical Data

#### Site Locations



The prehistoric inhabitants reused these geographical features, yielding remains of the Animas-phase occupation intermingled with the earlier possibly later prehistoric remains.

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### **H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods**

#### **Identification Methods**

The Animas phase sites included in this nomination are situated in the southwestern corner of New Mexico and were identified and described as a result of a reconnaissance archaeological survey (O'Laughlin et al. 1984) by the Jornada Anthropological Research Association that was funded by the Historic Preservation Division of New Mexico. This survey of noncontiguous areas was specifically designed to locate and record Animas phase sites of the area that had been mentioned in the literature of the area but that lacked adequate locational or descriptive information. Specific areas where sites were reported to occur were targeted for survey.

These areas were then traversed by three- to five-person crews with distances between individuals ranging from 10 to 30 m. When sites were found, they were compared to descriptions provided by earlier archaeologists. As a result of the survey, a number of new sites were discovered and documented. All located sites were described and mapped on forms provided by the Archaeological Records Management System of the Historic Preservation Division. Twenty-five sites from that survey are included in this nomination. Specifically, these sites all include architectural features and ceramics that date to the Animas phase occupation of Hidalgo County.

#### **Evaluation Methods**

##### *Integrity*

Animas and potential Salado phase sites should maintain integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. Within the confines of Hidalgo County, with its very sparse population, the only impacts to the integrity of the archaeological sites has been subsequent reoccupation of remote locations for ranching, natural erosion, archaeological investigations, and nonscientific artifact collecting and excavation. Reoccupation has impacted the integrity of the setting and association of a few of the properties, specifically the Alamo Hueco Site at the Alamo Hueco Ranch. Excavation at the sites, in some cases, has affected the integrity of design and workmanship of the architectural remains.

##### *Research Potential*

Animas phase architectural sites are a limited resource, and scientific excavation into a few of these sites over the last 70 years has demonstrated the archaeological potential of these sites (Table 1). Sites would be qualified to be part of this nomination if they have the potential to yield

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archaeological data to answer the specific research questions outlined in this nomination or any additional research questions that might be valid to the archaeological community at any future date.

### *Condition*

Sites in the area and in this nomination have been vandalized to varying degrees by hand-excavation and mechanical excavation techniques. As with sites throughout the west, the sites have been affected by erosion—entrenched washes have cut into deposits, and rain and sheet erosion have reduced the height of adobe walls and have exposed buried deposits. But these forces have also helped reveal the potential of these sites for yielding subsurface deposits (Table 4).

In many arid parts of Southwestern New Mexico, such as the Jornada del Muerto, only rows of foundation rocks remain to indicate the presence of adobe architecture. In comparison, the mounded remains on many of the Animas phase sites in this nomination have the potential to yield significant, possibly stratified remains sealed under fallen and melted adobe walls and the roof fall.

Substantial archaeological data could be derived from scientific excavation of these sites. Some of the small sites have 10-15 cm of trash deposits and remaining wall stubs. Most of these appear to have house mounds with walls of 30-60 cm in height and trash deposits of 15-45 cm thick. The larger sites have eroded house mounds of 50 cm to more than 2 m in height.

Therefore, sites that have been surfically impacted maintain some degree of integrity in all seven categories and should be included within this multiple property listing, if they qualify under the criteria of cultural and temporal affiliation and research potential.

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**Addendum**

The New Mexico Cultural Properties Review Committee reviewed the Animas Phase Sites Nomination for recommendation for listing on the National Register of Historic Places on December 11, 1992. There was one concern about the Salado Phase in the Historic Context Section that was discussed at this meeting. One committee member felt that the dates and cultural characteristics of the Salado Phase for New Mexico were incorrect in this nomination. Thus, this addendum is to reconfirm that the Salado Phase is poorly understood and needs further research.