

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

1113

SEP 20 2007

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Mesa Schoolhouse

other names/site number 5RT.2389

2. Location

street & number 33985 South US Highway 40 [N/A] not for publication

city or town Steamboat Springs [X] vicinity

state Colorado code CO county Routt code 107 zip code 80478

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

Signature of certifying official/Title: Mark Wolfe, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer; Date: 8/13/07

Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, Colorado Historical Society
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

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

Signature of the Keeper: Edson H. Beall; Date of Action: 11.1.07

Mesa Schoolhouse  
Name of Property

Routt County, Colorado  
County/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 count previously listed resources.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

#### Name of related multiple property listing.

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

Rural School Buildings in Colorado

#### Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.

0

### 6. Function or Use

#### Historic Function

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION: school  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL: meeting hall  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### 7. Description

#### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19<sup>th</sup> and Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century  
American Movements  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE  
walls WOOD  
roof METAL  
other \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### Narrative Description

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

Mesa Schoolhouse

Name of Property

Routt County, Colorado

County/State

### 8. Statement of Significance

#### Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

#### Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

#### Narrative Statement of Significance

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

#### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Education

Architecture

#### Periods of Significance

1916-1959

#### Significant Dates

1916

#### Significant Person(s)

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

#### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

#### Architect/Builder

Gumprecht, Art

### 9. Major Bibliographical References

#### Bibliography

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

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

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

# \_\_\_\_\_

- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

# \_\_\_\_\_

#### Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Colorado Historical Society

\_\_\_\_\_

Mesa Schoolhouse  
Name of Property

Routt County, Colorado  
County/State

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

- |    |      |         |          |                            |
|----|------|---------|----------|----------------------------|
| 1. | 13   | 346750  | 4474887  | (NAD27)                    |
|    | Zone | Easting | Northing |                            |
| 2. |      |         |          |                            |
|    | Zone | Easting | Northing |                            |
| 3. |      |         |          |                            |
|    | Zone | Easting | Northing |                            |
| 4. |      |         |          |                            |
|    | Zone | Easting | Northing | [ ] See continuation sheet |

The UTM reference point was derived from heads up digitization on Digital Raster Graphic (DRG) maps provided to OAHP by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management.

### Verbal Boundary Description

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

### Boundary Justification

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

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Laureen Lafferty Schaffer/ Historic Preservation Officer  
organization City of Steamboat Springs date May 23, 2007  
street & number PO Box 775088 telephone (970) 871-8278  
city or town Steamboat Springs state CO zip code 80477

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

#### Additional Items

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

### Property Owner

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

name City of Steamboat Springs Attn: Open Space Department  
street & number PO Box 775088 telephone (970) 879-2060  
city or town Steamboat Springs state CO zip code 80477

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

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to range from approximately 18 hours to 36 hours depending on several factors including, but not limited to, how much documentation may already exist on the type of property being nominated and whether the property is being nominated as part of a Multiple Property Documentation Form. In most cases, it is estimated to average 36 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form to meet minimum National Register documentation requirements. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, 1849 C St., NW, Washington, DC 20240.

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet****United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**Mesa Schoolhouse      Routt County, Colorado  
Rural School Buildings in Colorado MPSSection number   7   Page   1  **DESCRIPTION**

The 1916 Mesa Schoolhouse is a one-story, rectangular plan 32 ft. by 42 ft., gable-roofed resource with a covered entry porch located in the southeast corner. A concrete foundation supports the wood frame building with lap siding and wood shingles in the gable ends. The building features exposed rafter tails, a metal roof, and a flagpole atop the cupola. The interior walls are plaster and the floor is wood. The building stands in a small city-owned parcel outside of the Steamboat Springs city limits. The building faces east to US Highway 40, while the entry doors face south within the entry porch. A small irrigation ditch runs parallel and perpendicular to the highway. The Enterprise Ditch skirts the property and flows to the city-owned Haymaker Golf Course. The red-painted schoolhouse is a highly recognized and visible feature to travelers and residents who may pass the building after descending Rabbit Ears Pass and entering the Yampa Valley. The schoolhouse stands on the west side of US Highway 40, about 1.5 miles south of the junction with Highway 131 and approximately 7 miles south of Steamboat Springs.

Originally a schoolhouse with a large classroom and small art room and library from 1916-1959, the building was in residential use during the 1960s through the 1980s. The City of Steamboat Springs acquired the property in 1998 and in 2000; the building experienced a partial restoration and returned to community use.

The Mesa Schoolhouse is a one-story, rectangular plan, gable-roofed rural school building of wood frame construction. White-painted trim boards wrap the building. Supported by a concrete foundation, the building features a double entrance facing south within the southeast corner of the building. The eastern-most door leads to the cloakroom and is a five panel wood door. The western door of the set enters the large classroom and matches the other in form and trim. The east elevation faces the highway. Three are six-over-six double-hung facade windows trimmed in wood. The porch area of the building measures 10'3" by 10'3" and has wood plank decking. Five six-over-six double-hung windows appear on the south (side) elevation.

The west elevation features the rear entry. This entry has been modified over the years, but was returned to its original operational configuration in 2000. Although it appears possible that the space contained a six-over-six double-hung window, a former student recalls that a rear door was utilized to provide access to the stage during school plays. The door currently leads to the kitchen, but originally was access to the art room. Above the door is a transom, which was installed in the existing opening in 2000. North of the door is a six-over-six double-hung window. To the north of the large rectangular window are two smaller, square-shaped six light, fixed windows. These windows help illuminate the schoolroom. The north elevation features a total of seven matching six-over-six double-hung windows. Six of the windows are placed at regular intervals and provide consistent lighting to the main classroom. The seventh window appears on the eastern-most end and provides light to the storage closet.

Atop the metal-roofed building toward the eastern portion of the building is a cupola. It was largely rebuilt in 2000 and features horizontal lap siding on the lower portion. Four wood posts support the hipped-roof portion that has wood shingles. A metal flagpole tops the cupola. The bell is indigenous to the school building and is operational. After an approximately 20-year absence, the bell was returned to the school and reinstalled in 2000. The original wood shingle roof was replaced with the current standing seam metal in 1977-80. It is likely that the exterior portion of original brick chimney was removed at this time.

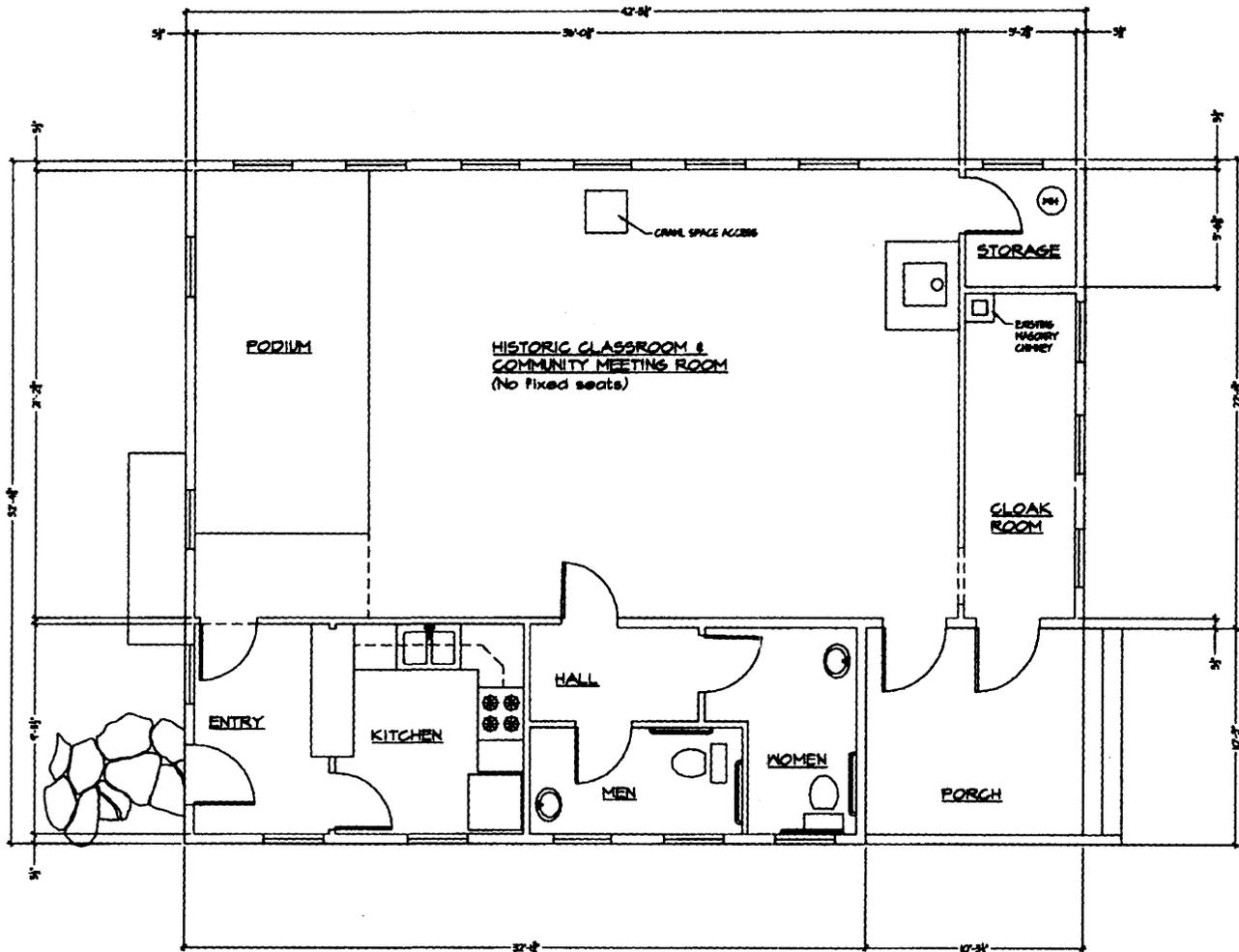
# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

Mesa Schoolhouse      Routt County, Colorado  
Rural School Buildings in Colorado MPS

Section number 7 Page 2

Most of the walls within the building are original plaster. New gypsum board walls were added to form the bathrooms within the original library space in 2000. Also in 2000, the kitchen was updated and formed from the original art room. The area between the classroom and the current kitchen was enlarged, widened, and reconfigured in 2000 for better accessibility. The slightly raised platform end (west) was lowered at the junction with the kitchen for easier access. Original wood floors exist throughout the building, with the exception of the bathrooms and kitchen. A dirt-floored crawlspace is accessed through a floor trap door on the northern side of the classroom. Darkly stained wainscoting appears throughout and measures approximately three feet high. Windows and doors are trimmed with wood and feature a dark stain. A black-painted wall serves as the blackboard at the rear and side of the classroom, east and south walls respectively, and is original to the building.



FLOOR PLAN

SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet****United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**Mesa Schoolhouse      Routt County, Colorado  
Rural School Buildings in Colorado MPSSection number   7   Page   3  

---

The Mesa Schoolhouse is a well-recognized, excellent example of the rural school building as it appeared in Colorado. The school is one of a few original schools in Routt County that has not been moved or converted to residential use, and is the only known non-residential example in the area. The Mesa Schoolhouse maintains a high degree of integrity in terms of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet****United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**Mesa Schoolhouse      Routt County, Colorado  
Rural School Buildings in Colorado MPSSection number   8   Page   4  **SIGNIFICANCE**

The 1916 Mesa Schoolhouse south of Steamboat Springs meets the registration requirements of the schoolhouse property type as delineated in the Multiple Property Documentation Form *Rural School Buildings in Colorado*. The building is eligible to the National Register under Criterion C in the area of **architecture** as an excellent local example of the early 20<sup>th</sup>-century rural schoolhouse and Criterion A in the area of **education**. Constructed as the Mesa District's permanent school, the building reflects the development of the Yampa Valley and its commitment to education.

The Mesa Schoolhouse's simple and functional construction somehow masks the more complex roles and processes that occurred within the building. The ultimate symbol of the West's commitment to universal and egalitarian education, rural schools brought together a wide range of ethnic backgrounds from diverse communities. In the south Yampa Valley floor area, Germans, French-Swiss, and Irish immigrants attended classes with children from older generation immigrant families. Like most rural schools, the Mesa Schoolhouse played a major role in the assimilation process. The Mesa Schoolhouse helped provide a solid foundation for the community. The structure itself epitomizes the vernacular Western rural schoolhouse, with its lack of ornamentation, placement of windows and doors, and the slope of the roof and bell tower. Built in a community that had limited funds, the schoolhouse served a purpose. The school met the utilitarian needs unique to life in the rural and often remote Routt County. Although intended to provide a place for education for the children of the Mesa District, it also became the social center of the small agricultural community and remains a powerful cultural symbol of American education and ideals.

Similar to many Western communities, many of Routt County's first schoolhouses were of temporary construction. Built to serve the needs of a few students in an area with sparse and somewhat transient populations, these initial schoolhouses were replaced with more permanent buildings in the early 1900s as population centers became established. Constructed in 1916, the existing frame Mesa Schoolhouse was a vast improvement over the previous log structure. The first Mesa School was a log cabin at the same location as the current Mesa Schoolhouse. It was "torn down to make room for the new building" in 1916 (undated *Steamboat Pilot* article at Tread of Pioneers Museum). The new building symbolized a permanent settlement which prioritized education and the needs of the community's families. Additionally, the Mesa Schoolhouse was the focus of the community and an integral part of rural life. Several newspaper clippings reference social events at the schoolhouse, including mention of itinerant church services.

The territory originally comprising the Mesa District (District 13), located approximately seven miles south of Steamboat Springs, consisted of mostly grassy lands in the Yampa Valley floor. The residents appear in the U.S. Census Sidney enumeration district. Many of the settlers came to the area for agricultural opportunities, as land was widely available and homestead claims were still placed as late as the 1920s. Since education was important to these settlers, schooling and schoolhouses became a priority for the community.

The first Mesa School was constructed of logs in 1890. Contemporary sources vary over the location, some saying that the current schoolhouse was constructed on the site of the old, while others maintain the original schoolhouse was closer to Highway 131 (closer to Steamboat Springs and about one mile away from the current location). An undated newspaper article at the Tread of Pioneers Museum and the 2006 discovery by an archaeologist of what appears to be a portion of the original log building,

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet****United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**Mesa Schoolhouse      Routt County, Colorado  
Rural School Buildings in Colorado MPSSection number   8   Page   5  

confirms the location of the original Mesa Schoolhouse. Classes were held from March to December in the early district to accommodate the winter's heavy snowfall.

The existing Mesa Schoolhouse was constructed in 1916. The district's 1916-17 General and Special School Fund records detail the expenses associated with the construction of the new frame building. The cost of building and fully furnishing the Mesa Schoolhouse equaled \$2,128.91. A.E. [Arthur] Gumprecht received payments for the construction of the school building and the no longer extant teacherage in 1920. Construction costs for the teacherage amounted to \$1,393.69. The teacherage remained in use through the 1950s and was demolished at an unknown date. The foundation is visible on the adjacent property that is separated from the city-owned parcel by a barbed-wire fence. Both the school and the teacherage were originally painted white with a blue-green trim, as were all of the school buildings in the county. Art Gumprecht, the builder, is well known and credited with constructing many of Steamboat Springs' Craftsman style residences and river rock outbuildings.

Mrs. Val Bruner was the first person to teach at the frame school building. Mrs. Tony Welton, Mrs. Aaron Winget, Mrs. Cecil Rorex, Ziltha Shaw, Natalie Stanko, and Mrs. Weeks followed as teachers. None of these names appear in census records; therefore, it is concluded that the teachers took husbands' names after marriage, but taught while single. The district implicitly prohibited married women from teaching.

School district consolidation closed the Mesa Schoolhouse in 1959. For the next 30 years the building served as a residential rental and the next decade as a "party place." When the City acquired the property, plywood and temporary walls that did not reach the ceiling divided the interior spaces. It is not known if a complete kitchen ever existed in the building, although it had a residential use. The Mesa Schoolhouse took on its current red color sometime in the late 1960s or early 1970s, when the then owners reportedly wanted the building to appear more like a traditional schoolhouse (Jayne Hill, May 16, 2007).

The City of Steamboat Springs and local non-profit *Historic Routt County!* acquired the building and the small parcel of land with the assistance of the State Historical Fund in 1998. During the spring of 2000, the building experienced a rehabilitation that included reinforcing the roof, sanding wood floors, providing for ADA access, and installing restrooms and a kitchen. The building once again serves one of its original functions by continuing to house social and community events.

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet****United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**Mesa Schoolhouse      Routt County, Colorado  
Rural School Buildings in Colorado MPSSection number   9   Page   6  

---

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

DelliQuadri, Winnie, "Mesa Schoolhouse," Routt County Historic Preservation Board Application Form for Local Historic Designation, February, 1998.

Doggett, Suzanne and Holly Wilson. *Rural School Buildings in Colorado Multiple Property Listing*. Denver, CO: Colorado Historical Society - Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, March 1999.

Gulliford, Andrew. *America's Country Schools*. Niwot: University Press of Colorado, 1996.

Hill, Jayne. Telephone interview, May 16, 2007.

Leslie, Jan. *Routt County Rural Schools, 1883-1960*. Steamboat Springs, CO: Legacy Books and Resources, 1998.

Richards, Dee. *Steamboat Round the Bend*, Steamboat Springs, CO: *The Steamboat Pilot*, 1976.

Routt County Assessor's Office. Steamboat Springs, CO.

School District RE-2 Administrative Offices, Steamboat Springs, CO.

*The Steamboat Pilot*, Colorado's Historic Newspaper Collection, 1859-1923 and December 13, 1935.

Tread of Pioneers Museum, 800 Oak Street, Steamboat Springs, CO.

United States Census, 1920.

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet****United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**Mesa Schoolhouse          Routt County, Colorado  
Rural School Buildings in Colorado MPSSection number 10 Page 7**GEOGRAPHICAL DATA****VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

The Mesa Schoolhouse is located on a .46 acre "parcel of land situate, lying and being in the County of Routt and State of Colorado, to wit:

A tract of land the NE corner of which is located at a point on the North line of the NE 1/4, Sec. 9, Twnp. 5 North, Range 84 West of the 6th P.M. at the intersection of said North line with the West line of the N. and S. County Road which bounds the above described quarter section on the East. From said NE corner of the boundary line of the tract conveyed extends S. along the W. line of said County Road 104.355 feet; thence W. at a right angle 208.71 feet; thence N. at a right angle 104.355 feet; thence E. at a right angle and along the N. line of the above described quarter section 208.71 feet to the point of beginning, in Routt County, Colorado, EXCEPT, beginning at a point on the N. line of said Section 9, from which point the NE corner of said Section 9 bears due E. a distance of 30 ft; thence along the N. line of Section 9, N 89° 58' 09" W a distance of 16.8 feet; thence S 0° 01' 00" W a distance 104.4 feet to the S line of the School Tract; thence along the S. line of the School Tract S. 89° 59' 00" E. a distance of 16.8 feet to the SE corner of the tract; thence along the East line of the School Tract N 0° 01' 30" W. A distance of 104.4 ft. more or less to the point of beginning."

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The boundary includes the city-owned parcel of land associated with the Mesa Schoolhouse.





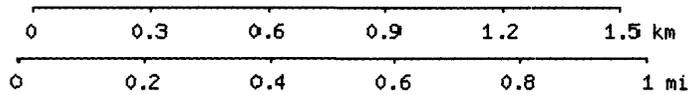
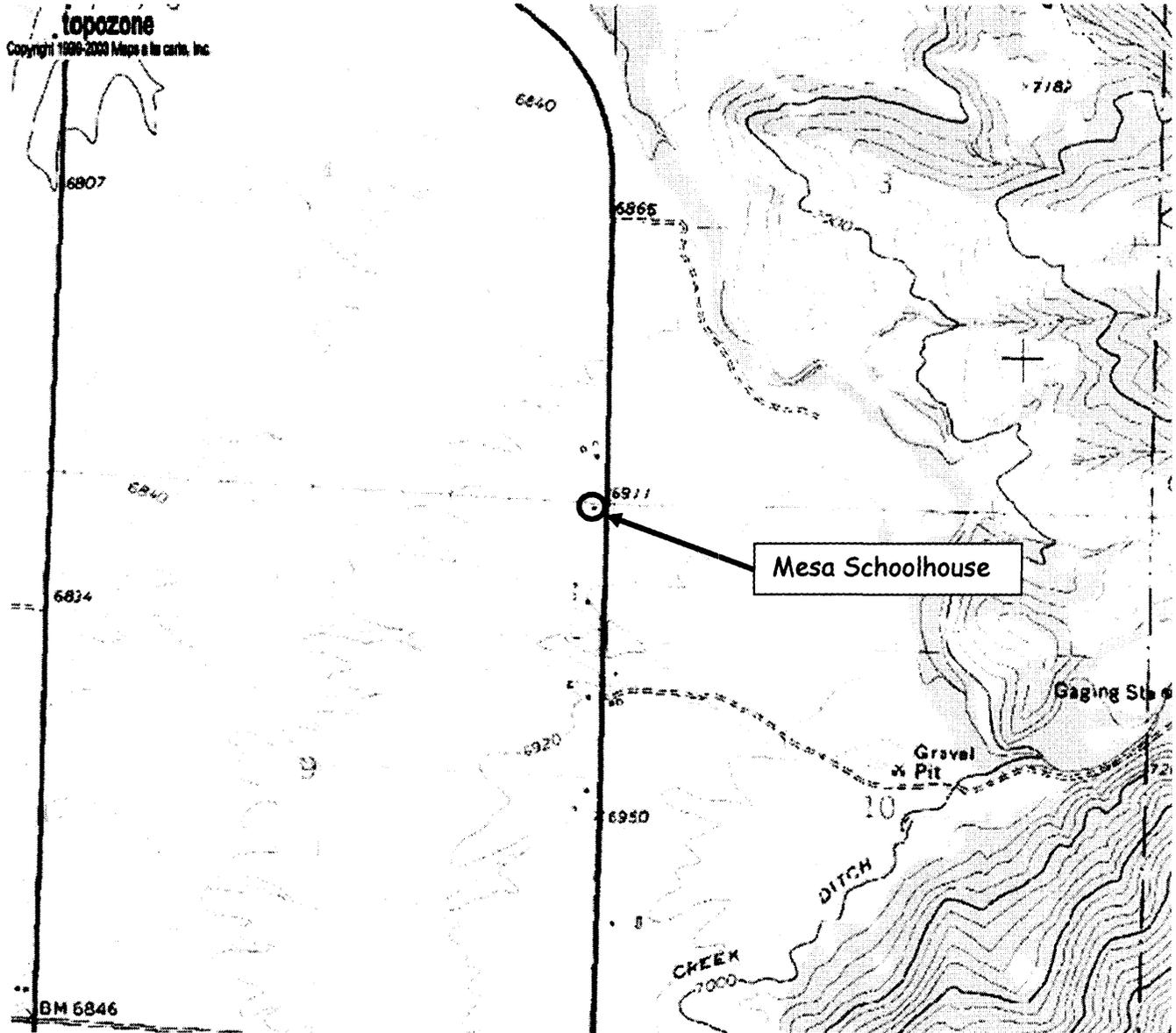
# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

Mesa Schoolhouse      Routt County, Colorado  
Rural School Buildings in Colorado MPS

Section number 10 Page 10

**USGS TOPOGRAPHIC MAP**  
Steamboat Springs Quadrangle, Colorado  
7.5 Minute Series



USGS Steamboat Springs (CO) Quadrangle  
Projection is UTM Zone 13 NAD83 Datum



**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet****United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**Mesa Schoolhouse      Routt County, Colorado  
Rural School Buildings in Colorado MPSSection number \_\_\_\_ Page 11**PHOTOGRAPH LOG**

The following information pertains to all photograph numbers:

Photographer: Laureen Schaffer  
Date of Photographs: February 14, 2007  
Negatives: Steamboat Springs Historic Preservation Office

Photo No.	Photographic Information
1	East elevation, camera facing west.
2	South elevation, camera facing north.
3	South and west elevation, camera facing northeast.
4	North elevation, camera facing southwest.
5	Cloakroom, camera facing south.
6	Cloak room and classroom doors from interior, camera facing southeast.
7	Classroom, camera facing west.
8	Classroom, camera facing east.
9	Interior, north windows, camera facing north.
10	Kitchen (former art room), camera facing east.
11	Doorway to restrooms, camera facing south.
12	Women's restroom, camera facing east.