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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting 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 Montoya Ranch
other names/site number Huerfano Cañon Post Office and Grocery, Talpa Post Office and Grocery, Farisita Post Office and Grocery, "Fort Talpa," 5HF.2555

2. Location

street & number 19176 Colorado Highway 69

N/A
N/A

 not for publication
city or town Farisita vicinity
state Colorado code CO county Huerfano code 055 zip code 81037

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 at the following level(s) of significance:

 national X statewide X local

[Signature] State Historic Preservation Officer Date 5/11/12
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, History Colorado
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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:)

[Signature] Date of Action 7.3.12
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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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	
3		buildings
2		sites
4	1	structures
		objects
9	1	Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

- DOMESTIC/Single dwelling
- COMMERCE/TRADE/Department Store
- AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTANCE/Animal facility
- GOVERNMENT/Post office

Current Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

- VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

- OTHER/Territorial Adobe

Materials
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

- foundation: ADOBE
- walls: ADOBE, STUCCO, WOOD
- roof: ASPHALT, METAL
- other: WOOD

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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.)

Summary Paragraph

The primary landmark on the former Montoya Ranch is a large fortified adobe building constructed during the early Hispano settlement of the upper Huerfano Valley. Situated a few feet from State Highway 69, it looms as visible to travelers today along this historic road alignment as it was when it was built (Photo 1). Montoya Ranch represents the efforts of Hispano emigrants from New Mexico who settled the rich farmland in a corridor stretching from Badito and St. Mary's to the east, to the headwaters of the Huerfano River near the Continental Divide to the west. In addition to the remarkable adobe building, the Montoya Ranch district features historic sheep facilities, an irrigation ditch, underground structures, remnants of cultivated plants, and historic artifacts, all of which speak to Hispano settlement, agricultural practices and architecture in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Narrative Description

Setting

In the late 1860s and early 1870s, Hispano settlers began farming, ranching and building homes in the rich verdant Huerfano River valley from Badito, the county seat, west to the present-day location of Gardner and up Turkey Creek to the north. Hundreds of people emigrated over the mountain passes from Taos and the San Luis Valley to build their adobe homes, dig ditches, and raise crops and sheep in a community first known as Huerfano Cañon, and later known as Talpa. Up on the bluff overlooking the wide Huerfano River and Turkey Creek drainages, the settlers built the fortified adobe, which provided protection and also was a center of the community.

Today the area is known as Farisita, the population has dwindled, and most of the nineteenth-century homes and businesses have melted into the landscape. There is no operating store or post office. The townsite consists of an 1886 adobe church that was later converted to a barn, wood corrals that were once associated with a livery stable (across the road from Montoya Ranch, which was still extant in 1985), one other residence that previously served as the second post office and the gas station, and a historic cemetery. In 1985, the townsite still retained the livery stable, but the camphouse next to it (where Asperidon Faris housed travelers) was no longer extant at that time, and two two-story commercial buildings (identified as the dance hall) were located further down the road (also no longer extant).¹ While the grouping of resources clearly reads as a townsite, it is currently largely abandoned. The Montoya Ranch adobe is not occupied, there are no sheep in the pens and corrals, and the surrounding hills are dry. The parcel during the Hispano settlement period and the Faris occupation included almost 160 acres, which originally included the livery stable and camphouse that were once across the highway from the Montoya Ranch adobe. The current parcel has been reduced to 15 acres and no longer includes the parcel across the highway.

Yet the setting has not changed in many significant ways. State Highway 69, a well-traveled regional road since before 1869, is still a few feet from the Montoya Ranch adobe. Long abandoned irrigation ditches, the extant sheep pens and associated corrals, an apple tree and a lilac bush speak of times when Montoya Ranch was a center of cultivation and livestock ranching. The expansive view from the Montoya Ranch bluff out across the Huerfano River valley to the Spanish Peaks is much the same. There was once a historic apple orchard on the eastern edge of the property, but the Colorado Department of Transportation cleared the orchard between 2007 and 2010 when they replaced the bridge and widened the roadway.² The setting retains its integrity.

¹ Rosalyn McCain, *The Old Farisita Livery Stable*, draft National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, 1985, site file, 5HF.265, Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, History Colorado, Denver, CO.

² The site form identifies archaeological artifacts in the project area and recommends not impacting any of the historic structures in the vicinity, but makes no mention of the historic orchard. O.D. Hand and Lisa Schoch, *An Intensive Cultural Resource Inventory of the Turkey Creek Bridge Replacement on State Highway 69, Huerfano County, Colorado*, Site Form, 5HF.866, 17 October 2007, Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, History Colorado, Denver, CO.

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Montoya Ranch house (contributing building, ca. 1869, Map Key 1)

Montoya Ranch is a pre-railroad Hispano adobe linear plan house (Photo 1) that provides an excellent southern Colorado example of Spanish Colonial architecture that evolved into Territorial Adobe as tastes and influences changed. The adobe building is located on a high triangular bluff with deep streambeds (Huerfano River and Turkey Creek) on two of the three sides and far views to the east, south and west. Built of 18" x 9" x 4-1/2" adobe bricks, the ground-level walls are 24" thick. The ground-level walls rest on a 29" to 35" thick underground adobe basement foundation and interior 31" to 33" thick adobe basement walls. The ground-level and basement rooms are numbered 1 through 4 (east to west on Map Key 1) for purposes of this discussion.

Roughly 74' x 46' (3400 square feet) in dimension, the Montoya Ranch adobe includes an extremely rare, potentially original full basement (Photos 25-31) with monumental interior adobe walls from the floor of the basement to the roof of the one-story building. No other extant example of this type of basement has been found in Colorado or New Mexico. The basement is divided into three large rooms and a fourth partially excavated (located under the westerly general store addition). The walls between the three rooms are 31" to 33" thick and support the ground-level 24" adobe walls directly above them. Original windows were protected with iron bars (see Photo 30, these windows are now partially buried and are not completely visible from the outside). Room 4 has later poured concrete foundations on the south and west sides.

Basement Rooms 1, 2, and 3 have hand-adzed heavy log *vigas* that support the ceiling (Photos 27-29). Room 4, the excavation under the general store, has smaller round skinned-log *vigas*, which are smoke or fire-blackened.

The south wall of Basement Room 1 has an egress door to an incline that leads outdoors (Photo 25). This door is protected by a shed roof covering on the exterior of the southeasterly façade. The basement doorway in the north wall of Basement Room 2 has been in-filled. On the exterior of the building this area is covered with a concrete patio and porch. It is not known whether these doorways were original to the basement construction.

Basement Room 1 has whitewash on the adobe plaster that covers the adobe block walls (Photo 31). This is the only colored wall finish in the basement. All other walls have smooth mud and straw finish over the adobes. The adobe blocks and walls are thick, more closely resembling early Hispano construction (prior to 1880) rather than the thinner blocks and walls that were indicative of Territorial Adobe construction (roughly from 1880 to 1940).

Basement Rooms 1, 2, and 3 have ceiling hatches in between the viga logs, which logs were carved and narrowed from their original diameters to about 6", apparently to accommodate stairs or ladders to the hatch doors. These doors are now concealed by floor covering materials in the ground-level rooms.

A staircase in the partially excavated Basement Room 4 leads to the outside of the west façade. A ladder also provides access from basement room 2 to the interior of ground-level room 2.

The exterior walls of ground-level Rooms 1, 2, and 3 are 24" thick. The exterior adobe southern wall of Room 4 is intact, but the westerly adobe wall is mostly collapsed (Photo 23).

Ground-level Rooms 1, 2, and 3 have ceilings averaging 10' high (Photos 19-22), with various floor materials that have been added at different times. Rooms 1 and 2 have skinned log *vigas* (Photo 21), while Room 3 has much larger adze-hewn *vigas* (Photos 19, 22), set vertically for strength. Rooms 1 and 2 ceilings appear to be tongue and groove boards, with a bead line carved into one edge of each board. The ceiling of Room 2 is black with soot and includes a hatch for roof access. Remnants of wall finishes are bright — pink, greens, lavender and white. The rooms have south and east-facing windows (Photos 1, 4) that consist of two side-by-side lights. Rooms 2, 3 and 4 have doors in the south façade.

Ground-level Rooms 1 and 2 have operable doors that open onto the north-facing porch. Each door has two windows west of the door. Room 1 has two four-over-four-light windows and Room 2 has two six-over-one-light windows. The south wall of Room 2 is slumping, with large cracks present between the south wall and the two interior walls of this room.

Ground-level Room 3 has an archway in the north end (Photo 20). Extending north from the original north wall and archway is a *jacal*-constructed 14' x 16' addition. This encloses the archway and there is a four-panel door and wood screen in the east side of the *jacal* addition (Photo 5). The shed roof is pitched slightly toward the north with less slope than the main hip roof. Two side-by-side panes of glazing serve as windows in the north wall, which are boarded up.

Ground-level Room 4 is a 45'-8" x 23' adobe addition which joins the original building on its west end, including a storefront and parapet on the north façade (Photo 2), which apparently served as the general store during the Faris occupation. This

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addition has a shed roof pitched slightly toward the west. The storefront includes a door centered between two windows, each of which includes two side-by-side large panes of glazing. The parapet is constructed of narrow lath with remnants of stucco and has a three-light transom above the door. This addition is badly deteriorated due to lack of use for many years and the impact of wind and rain against the western façade (Photo 23). The west wall appears to be disintegrated, with various wood coverings blocking the space. The log floor joists have failed in some places, so that the ground-level wood floor is collapsing and large holes are present. The door in the north façade is inoperable and the windows on either side of the door are covered with plywood. Interior finishes include layers of bright wallpaper and patterned stucco.

In addition to doors and windows on the south, east and north façades, doorways connect all three rooms on the interior of the building (Photos 21, 26).

The 7'-8" porch addition roof (Photo 6) is framed with rough-sawn 2" x 4" lumber, with a horizontal ledge at the top and bottom, a rafter continuing the hip roof slope, and a horizontal ceiling joist at the bottom. There are no nail holes on the underside of the horizontal members, indicating that no finish materials were added historically. The half-gable east end of this porch is clad in wood shingles. The porch originally extended the full north façade of the adobe building, and is covered at the north end of Room 3 with the *jacal* addition. A patterned concrete slab on grade extends the full north façade, serving as the floor to the porch.

The building may have been originally clad in protective stucco made of red soil still found at a local deposit. This finish is visible on the north façade under the porch roof and on interior walls (Photo 6). The remaining exterior walls are finished with a deteriorated cementitious stucco.

A hip roof with asphalt roof shingles covers Rooms 1, 2, and 3. Small gabled dormers face north and south; plywood covers the original multi-light windows. There are no exterior chimneys, although two chimneys are present in the attic (Photo 24), which connect to two cast-iron stoves on the ground floor.

Construction History & Alterations

The first phase of construction appears to be Basement Rooms 1 and 2. While the date of construction is unknown, it was not documented in the 1869-70 survey of the area.³ It is possible that construction preceded 1869 and was entirely below ground, obscuring the facility from passers-by. Also, this survey did not purport to document all structures, although a few are noted.

Basement Room 3 has *vigas* that are shaped differently, indicating that this basement may have been constructed at a later time from Basement Rooms 1 and 2.

Ground-level Rooms 1 and 2 are similar, including the beaded ceiling boards and similar diameter skinned log *vigas*. Room 3 varies substantially (compare Room 3 Photos 22 with Room 1 Photo 21), with a much wider ceiling board and much larger adzed log *vigas*, which were set vertically for strength, rather than horizontally as in the three basement rooms. The conclusion is that the three basement rooms and three ground-level rooms were not built at exactly the same time, but may have been built by different people who used materials and logs from varying sources.

The original roof appears to have been flat, since the present owner found 12" of dirt in the attic. This roof was covered by 1912 with a low-pitch hip roof (Photo H001), with an east-west oriented ridge, wide overhanging eaves and exposed rafters (added during the Montoya occupation (1874-1910 or earlier). A 1912 photo (Photo H001) shows deteriorated wood shingles on the roof, which have since been replaced with asphalt shingles. A 1930 photo (Photo H004) shows both a smooth roof material and the north façade porch, indicating that asphalt rolled roofing may have been added when the porch was built ca. 1923-30.

The Farises had a purchase contract with Victor Montoya in 1908 and Louise Faris began operating a post office from this location in 1910. The 1912 photo (Photo H001) shows two doors in the north façade (north end of Rooms 2, and 3) which appear to have patching around them, indicating a new or enlarged door opening, perhaps recently completely by the Farises. The 1912 photo shows a window positioned in a central location below the dormer (north end of Room 2), with a log header above it. This window may have been original. By 1928, this window was changed by the Farises to the current six-over-one-light double-hung two window arrangement (Photo H003).

³ Surveyor General's Survey Plat, T. 26 S., R. 69 W., Feb. 20, 1870.

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A 1923 photo (Photo H002) of the south façade shows two chimneys, one at the east and west ends of the roof ridge, a wood structure surrounding the rock-lined water well and perhaps a small window in the center of the south façade. The chimneys above the roofline are no longer extant, nor is the wood surround on the rock-lined well.

By 1930, the current porch was added along the entire north façade of Ground-level Rooms 1, 2, and 3 (Photos H004, H005). The western general store addition existed by this time, though the original date of construction is not known. The *jacal* addition at the north end of Room 3 is not visible in available photos, so the date of its construction and the opening of the archway in Room 3 is unknown, but is later than 1930.

The east windows, two windows in the south façade and the windows in the north façade of the *jacal* addition are similar size. Each set of windows consists of plain one-by wood surrounds and two side-by-side single panes of glazing. These may have been added at the same time by the Farises or a later property owner. Further architectural investigation is needed to identify the chronology of various door and window changes. The additional doors and larger windows accommodated the emerging multiple uses of the building.

The south façade also has a six-over-six-light double-hung sash window that may be a relocation of a window in the 1912 photo.

Since his acquisition of the property in 2001, the current owner removed 12" of dirt from the flat roof enclosed within the hip roof addition, and added some adobe interior finishes in Room 2. He also added the shed roof over the basement access at the southeasterly corner of the adobe building to prevent water from entering the basement.

This building retains a great deal of integrity, with the majority of changes over time taking place within the historic period. Other than some east and south-façade windows and doors that appear to have been added mid-twentieth century, all other modifications throughout the life of this building document the evolving needs of the occupants, were added during the period of historical significance, and are therefore historically significant. Ground-level Room 4 is deteriorated, but the materials are extant and the design of this addition, a general store built by Lebanese immigrants, is clearly discernable. The remainder of the building, both below ground and above ground, is in fair condition and conveys the history of Hispano settlement, and the later commercial and domestic uses of the building.

Wood Shed (contributing building, ca. 1920-1950, Map Key 2)

A weathered board-and-batten wood shed (Photo 9) is located south and southwest of the adobe building, north of the irrigation ditch on this property. Made of milled lumber, it is approximately 10' square and was built in the early twentieth century.

Wood Privy (contributing building, ca. 1934-1943, Map Key 3)

Near the wood shed is an overturned weathered wood privy (Photo 10) with rusted slightly sloping corrugated metal roof. Made of milled lumber, it is approximately 5' x 5', the wood-frame shed was built over a concrete vault that is oriented diagonally inside the building. The design closely matches one promoted by the WPA that was based on a style that was widely distributed by the U.S. Public Health Service in a bulletin entitled *The Sanitary Privy* (1933), and a widely distributed WPA poster.

The WPA built almost 32,000 privies in Colorado. These projects were generally undertaken by the Colorado Department of Health in a multi-county region. The WPA developed a standardized privy design of wood frame construction with a shed roof. They were mass-produced by a WPA employee in a central location for distribution in the multi-county region. The privies were delivered to the site by WPA workers and set on a base constructed by the WPA work crews.⁴

While the wood-portion of the privy is overturned, its original materials, including the concrete vault that remains in the ground, are extant.

⁴.Wolfenbarger 2005: sec. F, p. 105; see also *id.*, sec. E, pp. 65-66.

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Agricultural Landscape (contributing site, ca. 1869-1943, Map Key Site A)

The area around the Montoya Ranch building retains many features of the historic ranch landscape. A number of historic agricultural tools and related materials are found throughout Site A on the surface of the ground, including a livestock watering trough fashioned from a log and a low wooden structure that may have served as a hay feeder. Broken dishes, horseshoes, barbed wire and other signs of historic occupation surround the adobe building.

An apple tree (Photo 14, Map Key 5) is a few feet northwest of the northwest corner of the Montoya Ranch adobe building. The property historically had an apple orchard, east of the building, down the bluff toward Turkey Creek. Most remnants of the orchard were demolished recently by a Colorado Department of Transportation bridge project over Turkey Creek, with the new bridge opening to traffic in July 2011. The size of the non-irrigated apple tree suggests that groundwater may be perched close to ground level in this bluff. The surface of the Turkey Creek and Huerfano River aquifers are about 50' lower than the site around the building. A large lilac bush (Map Key 6) is also growing in front of the Ground-level Room 4 general store addition, indicating that at one time some cultivated landscaping plants were maintained by users of the Montoya Ranch building.

The arid landscape is home to several plant species including curly bluegrass, black medick, common dandelion, common sheep sorrel, common sunflower, curly dock, great plantain, Nuttall's poverty-weed, white clover, winterfat, woolly honeysweet, and woolly plantain. The area around the adobe, which is on a rise above the historic sheep ranching landscape, is only sparsely vegetated with most of the wild vegetation occurring in the agricultural area where sheep would have grazed.

Montoya Ditch (contributing structure, 1880, Map Key 4)

A long depression or swale runs east-west about 112' south of the adobe building, indicating an irrigation ditch alignment. According to the property deed and the records of the Colorado Office of the State Engineer, this ditch is served by a water right (appropriation priority number 224) that is diverted from Turkey Creek. This ditch is the Montoya ditch. Victor Montoya originally constructed the ditch in February 1880, but the decree for the water right appropriation was not entered by the court until April 1901.⁵

Sheep Facility (contributing site, ca. 1880, Map Key Site B)

A ruins of a shepherd's cabin, sheep corrals, and pens or stalls are located southeast of the adobe building down the bluff into the Turkey Creek-Huerfano River floodplain. The façade of the corrals and pens is about 30' lower than the bluff where the building is located. The pens or stalls (Photos 7, 15, 18, Map Key 13) are made of small diameter piñon and pine logs, with a lattice of branches that supported a roof covering that is no longer extant. The pens face east and are supported by wrought iron bars fashioned into a spiral design. It is not known if these bars were part of the original construction or were added later to reinforce the structure. Corrals (Photos 15-16, Map Key 12) built of sawn lumber are adjacent on the east side of the pens. The shepherd's cabin (Photo 17, Map Key 11) is located at the north end of the row of pens and was built of sawn lumber with a corrugated metal roof. The cabin is collapsed, but the design can be determined from the extant materials. These resources appear in photos dated 1927 and 1930, indicating that they were likely built during the Montoya occupation (1880-1910).

A number of historic agricultural tools and related materials are found throughout Site B on the surface of the ground, including containers, hinges, barbed wire, and other articles of unknown use or function.

Rock-Lined Underground Well (contributing structure, ca. 1869-80, Map Key 7)

A 6'6" x 7'4" rock-lined underground structure (Photo 11) with at-grade concrete surround is located 18'8" south of Ground-level Room 3 of the adobe building (rear façade). It appears to be a historic water well and is full of debris.

⁵ Pursuant to Colorado Law, HB11-1289, which went into effect on 15 August 2011, the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation at History Colorado posted notification of both the water-related structure located on this property and its associated water right in the Colorado Water Court Resume. The water-related structure, which is the Montoya Ditch, is what is considered a contributing resource for the sake of this nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

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Rock-Lined Underground Room (contributing structure, 1869-80, Map Key 8)

A 9' x 11' rock-lined underground structure (Photo 12) with at-grade concrete surround is located 12' south of Ground-level Room 2 of the adobe building (rear façade). While it looks very similar to the historic rock-lined water well, descendants of the Faris family say that there is access to an underground ice storage room.⁶ This structure and the well are 8'6" apart.

Underground Cistern (contributing structure, ca. 1940, Map Key 9)

A third structure (Photo 13) is located further east of the rock-lined underground structures, near the southeast corner of the adobe building. The opening to the cistern has a wood, sheet metal, and corrugated metal surround and water is visible inside the cistern. According to the present owner, the cistern is approximately 6'-wide, 8'-deep. The interior construction materials are unknown, but may be concrete. The owner believes it was built in the 1940s and collected water from a downspout on the adobe building. There is a pulley above the opening to the cistern that was probably used to pull buckets of water from the cistern.

Metal Shipping Container (non-contributing structure, 2009, Map Key 10)

There is also a non-contributing large metal shipping container and contemporary debris strewn about the property. The contemporary shipping container was recently brought to the property by the present owner to use as storage for the contents of the adobe building when rehabilitation projects occur in the future.

Integrity of the District

It is possible that some roof, window and door alterations happened after the end of the period of historical significance; these alterations have not been dated exactly. The most recent of these alterations are still fairly old, having occurred at least fifty years ago and perhaps sixty to seventy years ago. They do not impact the integrity of the adobe building because they continue to document changes that occurred during the period of significance as the function of the building evolved.

The westerly addition (Ground-level Room 4) of the adobe building is badly deteriorated. However, the original design and materials remain clear to the observer. The exterior adobe walls, door and window openings, the wood storefront and parapet, the roofline and the interior finishes remain extant and convey the story of a rural general store built by a Lebanese immigrant family. The shepherd's cabin is collapsed, however, the design and materials can still be identified by the ruins. The contemporary storage container on the property is a temporary condition. After the adobe building is rehabilitated in the future, the owner's personal property will be moved from the storage container into the building and the storage container will be removed from the property.

The buildings, structures, and site retain remarkable integrity of materials, workmanship and design. The district retains a high level of integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association through the combination of extant historic resources and the surrounding landscape, which has changed little over the decades. Other historic villages in this region have entirely disappeared or only foundations remain. It is a testament to the high quality of workmanship that the fortified adobe building stands overlooking the Huerfano River valley from the Farisita bluff. These resources and the historically significant alterations speak to the evolving functions and ownership of the property over time. This evolution tells the story of patterns of settlement and changing political and economic conditions in the history of Colorado and Huerfano County.

⁶ Interview with Faris granddaughters Kay Beth Avery and Edith Sheldon, Apr. 16, 2011.

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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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ETHNIC HERITAGE/Hispanic
ARCHITECTURE
COMMERCE
EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT
AGRICULTURE

Period of Significance

ca.1869-1943

Significant Dates

1910

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of historical significance for Montoya Ranch is ca. 1869 to 1943. From ca. 1869 to 1910, the property demonstrates the history of the Hispano settlement in the upper Huerfano River valley. Beginning with the original construction by Hispano settlers in the 1860s, the period of significance addresses the style of architecture and the settlers' need for domestic housing, a general store, and sheep ranching facilities. While the Montoya family occupied the

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property from 1874, the adobe appears to predate their occupation, with neighbor Pedro Garcia most likely beginning construction of the building when he arrived as part of the colonization of the Vigil-St. Vrain Spanish Land Grant in the 1860s. A significant year is 1910, when the Farises, whose families immigrated from the region of present-day Lebanon, opened a store and post office in the building, ending the period of significance for early Hispano settlement of the Huerfano River valley. From 1910 until 1943, the Faris family continued the use of the property as a home, for sheep ranching and farming, and for post office and general store purposes.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

N/A

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

Montoya Ranch is eligible to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the areas of Ethnic Heritage/Hispanic and Exploration/Settlement from ca. 1869-1910, Agriculture from ca. 1869-1943, and Commerce from 1889-1943. Additionally the property is eligible under Criterion C in the area of Architecture from ca. 1869-1910 as a rare example of an early Hispano residence and an excellent example of Spanish Colonial architecture that was modified to the Territorial Adobe type of building. Finally the property is eligible under Criterion D in the areas of Ethnic Heritage/Hispanic and Architecture from ca. 1869-1910. Eligibility is at the state level of significance for Ethnic Heritage/Hispanic and Architecture, and the local level for all other areas of significance. Local tradition holds that Montoya Ranch was built originally as a community defense facility, possibly under the leadership of Pablo Antonio Garcia, to serve a communal defensive purpose during a period of time that conflicts with Native Americans were common in the region. A forensic analysis of the architecture of the adobe building will yield more definitive information about the early construction dates and verify if the basement pre or post-dates the rest of the building. After one or more Hispano families occupied and owned this property (including Victor and Juliana Montoya from ca. 1874 to 1910), the Faris family, who were Lebanese immigrants, purchased it in 1911 after occupying it by 1910 pursuant to a purchase contract with the Montoyas.⁷ Louise Faris operated the post office and a general store, and the family raised sheep, fruit, and vegetables. They made substantial modifications to serve these functions, including a porch, enlarging the original building, adding a commercial storefront, and adding a number of doors and windows. These historically significant modifications illustrate the growth of commerce in the upper Huerfano River valley. Their daughter, Jeanette Faris Thach (after whom the area was renamed from Talpa to Farisita), lived in the building with her husband, continuing the various Faris operations until about 1943. The property may also have intact, undocumented, and undisturbed archaeological deposits relevant to the above stated periods of significance, and in particular these deposits could broaden our understanding of Hispano history and the largely undocumented history of Lebanese immigration to Colorado.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

Criteria A & D: Ethnic Heritage/Hispanic (ca. 1869-1910)

The district is strongly associated with the nineteenth-century wave of Hispano emigration from New Mexico to the San Luis Valley of Colorado, including Hispano settlement from the San Luis Valley to the northeast into the upper Huerfano River valley. This emigration and settlement was influenced by broad historical patterns including the changing jurisdiction of the southwestern United States from Spanish to Mexican to the United States, the shift from Spanish land grant law to American property ownership laws, and the impact of Euro-American emigration on Hispano peoples of today's Huerfano County.

After Mexico won its independence from Spain in 1821, the lines of commerce opened between Mexico and the United States, with a great deal of the business activity following historic trails that crossed present-day Huerfano County, including the Santa Fe Trail and the Trappers Trail. Ceran St. Vrain and Cornelius Vigil were influential entrepreneurs in

⁷ Deed from Victor Montoya and Julianita Montoya, grantors, to Asperidon Faris and Louise Faris, grantees, dated Oct. 6, 1911, Book 79, page 531, Public Records of the Huerfano County Clerk and Recorder; Purchase Agreement between Victor Montoya, seller, and Asperidon Faris and Louise Faris, purchasers, dated July 31, 1911, Book 81, page 99, Public Records of the Huerfano County Clerk and Recorder.

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Colorado and New Mexico. One of their endeavors was to apply in 1842 to the Mexican government for a huge land grant in the Huerfano and Pueblo County areas of Colorado. Settlement of the proposed land grant was slow, in large part because the Ute bands opposed it, harassing the few settlers that made the attempt to occupy Huerfano County in the 1840s and 1850s.

In 1846 the United States invaded Mexican territory (in present-day Colorado and New Mexico) and succeeded in re-drawing the national boundaries to those that we know today. The nationality of families who had lived in North America for decades, and in some cases centuries, changed from Spanish to Mexican to American in less than thirty years. After the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, the Huerfano County area became part of the United States' New Mexico Territory and in 1861 it was designated the Colorado Territory.

In the 1860s, hundreds of people began to migrate from New Mexico into the San Luis Valley, and then further northeast to the upper Huerfano Valley. Eye witness accounts report that the area was heavily settled and the 1870 census finds thousands of people, mostly Spanish-surnamed, living in Huerfano County. It is significant that United States land ownership records in the area are dated no earlier than 1874. This high level of migration and lack of land ownership records was a direct result of the uncertainty caused by the contested Vigil-St. Vrain land grant (also known as the Las Animas Grant):

The meandering course of the Huerfano, said to be the finest stream in Colorado, with its wide "bottoms" dotted here and there with human habitations as far as one could see, enclosed by low but regular bluffs, was a sight which eclipsed the former...At the foot of the slope of the divide between St. Charles and the Huerfano, nearest the latter, is a strip of land 12 miles or more in length and averaging 2 miles in width, as perfectly adapted to agricultural purposes as any I have seen in the territory. I thought that this would be a capital place to locate two or three Colonies; but was surprised that not one house, or other evidence of improvement, was to be seen anywhere outside the low bottom of the Huerfano. I inquired of J.B. Rice, at whose residence I stopped over night, why it was that this beautiful tract had not been claimed before this time? His reply was: "It is a part of the infernal Las Animas Grant and cannot be settled by preemption or homestead. The majority of the settlers have heretofore been too scantily supplied with means to purchase of the grantees, besides they could not if they wished to, as the grant has been in such an unsettled state since its confirmation that the grantees are still unable to convey bona fide titles to their land."⁸

The 1848 Treaty promised to recognize prior Spanish and Mexican land grant claims, but the land ownership situation was largely undocumented and the legal legitimacy of the land grant claim was very uncertain. Due to the excellent farmland and water available in the Talpa (known then as Huerfano Cañon) area, it was heavily settled in the 1860s, long before many other areas of Huerfano County. The settlers from New Mexico brought their customs with them, including a communal approach to some forms of property rights. The New Mexicans built homes, dug ditches, and provided for community protection, while watching closely the administrative, legislative and judicial decisions at the federal level that eventually extinguished any claims deriving from St. Vrain and Vigil. Within months of the decision in 1874 to deny most claims deriving from the Vigil-St. Vrain land grant, the New Mexican settlers in the Talpa area had filed their paperwork in the government land office in Pueblo and obtained their quarter section (160 acres) of land as permitted under the U.S. Homestead Act of 1820.

The upper Huerfano River valley was also the next logical place for expansion of the growing population in northern New Mexico:

Nostrand writes that the "homeland" of this culture was originally centered in northern and central New Mexico but, in the mid-nineteenth century, following the conclusion of the Mexican-American War in 1848, expanded northward along the Rio Grande into Colorado, which represents its most northern extension. In Colorado, such settlements were established in the San Luis Valley and on the east side of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains in western Las Animas and Huerfano counties. Nostrand compares the migration of these settlements to "a fireworks display of shooting stars: each star that shot into space gave rise to several new stars, which in turn parented

⁸ *Colorado Chieftain*. Pueblo, Colorado, Mar. 23, 1871: p. 3, col. 2.

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stars of their own, all headed in the same direction.”⁹

Both the large adobe building and the ruins of the sheep camp on this site speak to the property's eligibility in the area of Hispano ethnic heritage from 1880 to 1910. The building demonstrates Hispano building techniques and architectural forms, the sheep camp demonstrates the primary agricultural pursuit of Hispanos in Colorado during this period, and the information potential of potential archaeological sites (the pit of the WPA privy, the former cistern, former underground ice storage room, and the ample surface evidence of artifacts surrounding both the adobe and the sheep camp) has the potential to broaden our understanding of early Hispano life in Colorado.

Criterion A: Exploration and Settlement (ca. 1869-1910)

Available information about the settlement of Huerfano Cañon points to the settlement of the area by the Garcia family as significant players in the organization of this new community. Pablo Antonio Garcia occupied lands adjacent to the Montoya Ranch adobe and appropriated water rights as early as 1867.¹⁰ The eldest of at least three brothers who emigrated from the Taos area of New Mexico, it appears that Pablo Antonio may have been a significant leader within the emerging Hispano community in the 1860s.¹¹ He may have played an important role in the construction of the Montoya Ranch adobe. In addition to the land acquisition and water rights development by Sr. Garcia, water rights data also indicates the “School Section Ditch” was appropriated in 1866 from the section adjacent to Montoya Ranch to the east. The School Section was section 36, one of the two sections (19 and 26) in each township that were set aside by the federal government for support of schools. It was set aside in 1876, but ten years prior to that, Hispano settlers were engaging in agricultural activity on this parcel.

It is possible that this site was considered a communal location for a few years during the settlement period. According to descendants of the Garcia and Medina family, the Montoya Ranch building was in use by the 1870s as a center of commerce and a community gathering place.¹² Land patents were issued in the 1870s to Spanish-surnamed homesteaders all around the quarter section where the Montoya Ranch adobe was built. In water court, Victor Montoya received an 1880 appropriation date for the Montoya ditch.¹³ In his application for a homestead parcel, Montoya claimed to have been on the land since 1874.¹⁴ A land patent was not issued to Victor Montoya until 1887, about twenty to twenty-five years after the surrounding land was settled.¹⁵

The Montoya Ranch adobe is a rare example of southern Colorado adobe architecture that provides an example of a type of single-family dwelling used by Hispano families in the Huerfano Valley. From 1880 until 1910, it was owned by New Mexican emigrants, Victor and Juliana Montoya, who used it for sheep ranching and to raise their family. The resources speak to the property's eligibility under Criterion A in the area of Hispano settlement from 1880 to 1910. The Montoya Ranch historic district is a highly significant resource to the southern Colorado heritage related to Hispanic settlement, as a rare and intact cultural landscape.

⁹ National Park Service, *San Luis Valley and Central Sangre de Cristo Mountains Reconnaissance Survey Report (Draft)*. P. 11. Dec. 2011, quoting Nostrand, Richard L. *The Hispano Homeland*. P. 96. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press. 1992.

¹⁰ U.S. Patent, Certificate Nos. 864, 865, dated July 30, 1874; Garcia Ditch No. 1, appropriation date of Apr. 25, 1867, <http://cdss.state.co.us/DNN/WaterRights/tabid/76/Default.aspx> (search for “Garcia”).

¹¹ The Garcia brothers and their family members can be found in several sources: *1880 Census, Garcia Family*, land patent records found in the General Land Office records, *1873 Tax Roll, Jose Blas Teodosio Garcia, Family Group Sheet*.

¹² Interview of Mary Casias (Garcia family descendent) by Edith Thach Sheldon, Jul. 19, 2011.

¹³ Colorado Division of Water Resources Water Rights Data Base, Water Rights Report by Structure Name.

¹⁴ General Land Office case file for U.S. Patent Certificate No. 2594. The 1880 census reveals that Victor and Juliana Montoya (spelled Montolla) had a twelve-year-old child (Enofrio) who had been born Colorado, implying that they had lived in Colorado since at least 1868. *1880 Census, Montoya Family*. They are not listed in the 1870 census of Huerfano County.

¹⁵ U.S. Patent issued to Victor Montoya, Certificate No. 2594, dated Mar. 19, 1887, Book 43, Page 476, Public Records of the Huerfano County Clerk and Recorder.

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Criterion A: Agriculture (ca. 1869-1943)

The Montoya Ranch adobe was occupied by two families, the Montoyas and the Farises, who engaged in sheep ranching and grew crops. The property has an extensive example of sheep pens and corrals and a shepherd's cabin, speaking to the historic sheep ranching industry in Huerfano County, the primary industry during this period of time. While cattle ranching was developed by some non-Hispanic settlers later in the nineteenth century, sheep ranching was the main industry among Spanish-American settlers and many Anglos as well. The Montoya Ranch historic district was a sheep ranch throughout its period of significance.

The property includes many features that document historic sheep ranching. Probably the oldest features are the sheep pens (Map Key 13). Built of piñon and poles of other tree species, the vertical posts are buried in the ground and horizontal members are positioned in branch crotches and notches carved with an ax. The fact that these are still standing, without the posts rotting over the decades, is a testament to the knowledge of the builders of appropriate tree species for this use. These pens appear to have been built at the beginning of the sheep ranching function of the property, as early as 1880 or perhaps earlier.

Other features related to sheep ranching include a shepherd's cabin, the foundation of another two-room shed or cabin, vertical posts set in the ground east of the pens that appear to have had a corral function, and a structure that may have been used for loading sheep into a wagon or motor vehicle. Some of these features can be seen in a 1930 photo (Photo H009) and appear to be well used at that time, indicating their nineteenth century construction. Site B, the sheep facility area, includes these features as well as artifacts on the surface of the ground such as barbed wire, hinges, horseshoes, and other unidentified items.

The property can still be irrigated by the Montoya ditch, appropriated in 1880, and a large apple tree still survives on the property, the sole remnant of what was once a larger orchard. In addition to these resources, Site A around the adobe building shows evidence of artifacts related to agricultural and domestic use for over 150 years.

Victor Montoya called his property a "ranch" when he sold it to the Farises pursuant to a 1911 contract.¹⁶ The Faris family history states that the sheep ranch was a going concern when Asperidon and Louise Faris bought it. The features in Site B also speak to a nineteenth-century origin. The Farises continued sheep ranching at least into the 1930s (see family photos H002, H006, H007, H009, H010). Thus, the extant sheep facility features speak to Hispanic heritage by documenting the sheep industry common among Hispanic settlers of the upper Huerfano Valley from the 1860s on, and documents the ongoing importance of sheep ranching as an agricultural pursuit in Huerfano County into the twentieth century.

These resources speak to the property's eligibility under Criterion A in the area of agriculture from 1880 to 1943.

Criterion A: Commerce (1889-1943)

Oral histories discuss the use of the Montoya Ranch adobe building for commercial purposes in the nineteenth century, although few details have been found.¹⁷ Victor Montoya is listed as a retailer of general merchandise from 1889 to 1895 in the *Colorado Business Directory*.¹⁸

¹⁶ Purchase Agreement between Victor Montoya, seller, and Asperidon Faris and Louise Faris, purchasers, dated July 31, 1911, Book 81, page 99, Public Records of the Huerfano County Clerk and Recorder.

¹⁷ Interview of Mary Casias (Garcia family descendent) by Edith Thach Sheldon, Jul. 19, 2011, see also Nancy Christofferson, "Farisita," *Huerfano World Journal*, Nov. 11, 2010.

¹⁸ *Fifteenth Annual Volume Colorado State Business Directory*. Denver, Colorado: James R. Ives & Co. 1889) (Badito listing); *Sixteenth Annual Volume Colorado State Business Directory*. Denver, Colo.: James R. Ives. 1890) (Badito listing); *Seventeenth Annual Volume Colorado State Business Directory*. Denver, Colo.: James R. Ives. 1891) (Badito listing); *Eighteenth Annual Volume Colorado State Business Directory*. Denver, Colo.: James R. Ives. 1892) (Talpa listing); *Nineteenth Annual Volume Colorado State Business Directory*. Denver, Colo.: The Ives Publishing Co. 1893) (Talpa listing); *Twentieth Annual Volume Colorado State Business Directory*. Denver, Colo.: The Colorado Directory Publishing

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By 1910, however, the Farises took over the general store and post office functions in Talpa, locating these functions at Montoya Ranch (see historical photo H001). William L. Harmes, probably the most well-known merchant in Talpa and postmaster for twenty years, was doing business in an adobe building across the street from Montoya Ranch from at least 1890 until his death in 1898.¹⁹ His eldest son, Luis Narciso Harmes, carried on as storekeeper and daughter Isabel Harmes served as postmaster until the Farises assumed these roles in 1910 at Montoya Ranch.²⁰ Either Luis and Isabel quit these functions by 1910, or made it known that they wanted to quit, because the Farises felt there was a need in the community and bought the Montoya Ranch property in order to pursue commercial goals.

A 1912 photo of the Montoya Ranch adobe shows a sign stating "GROCERIES DRY GOODS" (Photo H001). By 1930, photos show the addition of the current Room 4, the westerly general store. Louise Faris operated the store and post office from 1910 to 1912, then again in 1923 after the death of her husband Asperidon at age 39, until the 1930s, when Louise fell seriously ill. Her daughter Jeanette came home from college during the Great Depression to care for her younger brothers and tend the store.²¹

To accommodate the changing function of Montoya Ranch, the Farises were responsible for most of the modifications over the years, including adding doors and windows, adding the covered porch and possibly building the Room 4 general store addition at the west end of Montoya Ranch (date of construction unknown; the earliest photo documentation is 1930, see photo H005). While the general store addition is in very poor condition, it speaks clearly to the commercial history of the Talpa/Farisita area during the period of historical significance. A few modifications, such as addition of larger windows in the south and east façades, may have occurred after the Faris occupation. Other than this, the Montoya Ranch building retains its integrity as an example of commercial history in Huerfano County from 1889 to 1943.

Criteria C & D: Architecture (ca. 1869-1910)

The Montoya Ranch adobe is eligible under Criterion C at the local level of significance for its transitional vernacular architectural expression, influenced by the Spanish Colonial style at the time of its construction, and Territorial Adobe form as its functions and occupants changed throughout the period of significance. It is significant from the first date of construction throughout the time that historically significant alterations document the changing social and commercial trends described by this district: ca. 1869-1910. In addition to the Montoya Ranch adobe building, the rock-lined well and the underground ice room appear to be of nineteenth-century origin and further document the techniques of meeting the needs of the Hispano settlers.

The construction features of Montoya Ranch, as well as events around the time of its construction, possibly indicate a defensive purpose for the Hispano community that was settling around this parcel. The physical evidence includes the rare, heavily built basement, with bars on the windows and several means of egress through the ceiling to ground level. This would provide substantial protection for people, food, weapons and ammunition. The size and features of this basement are substantially more fortified than the size and features of a more common root cellar.

When started as an underground facility for defensive purposes, the very rare basement rooms were constructed first.²² Basements are almost unknown in adobe construction due to the structural engineering and protection from moisture that

Co. 1894) (Talpa listing); *Twenty-First Annual Volume Colorado State Business Directory*. Denver, Colo.: James R. Ives. 1895) (Talpa listing).

¹⁹ Email from Roger Rydberg, Colorado Postal History Society, to Vicky Bunsen Doucette, dated June 14, 2011. Mr. Rydberg researched the postmasters and locations in the Huerfano Cañon, Talpa and Farisita area using the archives held in the estate of William H. Bauer (deceased), one of the authors of *Colorado Post Offices 1859-1989*.

²⁰ One news article reports that Luis Harmes suffered a burglary in 1899. "Daring Holdup at Talpa," *Denver Times*. Sept 19, 1899: 2. Isabel Harmes was appointed postmaster in 1899 and served until Louise Faris was appointed in 1910.

Email from Roger Rydberg, Colorado Postal History Society, to Vicky Bunsen Doucette, dated June 14, 2011

²¹ Email from Roger Rydberg, Colorado Postal History Society, to Vicky Bunsen Doucette, dated June 14, 2011

²² Dr. Chris Wilson, Professor, University of New Mexico, is also an expert on New Mexican adobe construction. He is not aware of any adobe building with a full basement such as is found at Montoya Ranch. Email dated June 7, 2011, from Chris Wilson to Vicky Bunsen Doucette (has "seen occasional partial storage cellars under hillside houses in Chacon NM,

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are essential to keep such a building intact. Not only has this adobe building survived the decades, but its basement is an intact testament to the knowledge and careful attention to quality and detail by its builders. In addition to the basement, the foundations, interior walls and exterior walls were built 24" to 35" thick, indicating fortification. After the need for defense had passed, adobe walls were normally built about 16" thick.²³

The need for fortification existed in the 1860s, not the 1880s. Did the settlers begin farming the adjacent parcels in the 1860s and agree to set aside the high bluff with the long views as a defensive resource for the emerging community? The building has been known locally for years as "Fort Talpa" and the reason has been given that it was used as a private defensive facility, although there is no direct documentation of this use. A forensic analysis of building materials and construction techniques for the adobe and its basement may clarify the original purpose of the basement and the dates of construction.

After the defensive purpose faded and the building was expanded and modified for domestic use, the building was expanded in phases from the 1860s until 1910, when the property was occupied by purchasers Louise and Asperidon Faris. After the basement rooms were completed, Ground-level Rooms 1 and 2 were built in one phase and Ground-level Room 3 in another phase, a common practice in southwestern vernacular architecture.

Unlike their English counterparts, larger Spanish Colonial domestic buildings were not usually conceived as multi-roomed wholes but grew, instead, as series of independent rooms. Modest households had but a single room. As affluence increased, one-room units were added to make extended dwellings whose size was limited only by the wealth of the builder. Typically, the first two or three rooms were joined end-to-end to make a linear row; units were then added single file but at right angles to make an L or U. In the largest houses, the rooms made rectangular masses, enclosing an inner courtyard (the *patio* or *placita*).²⁴

Next a hip roof was added, consistent with the Territorial Adobe form in the late nineteenth century. Flat roof construction was dominant in New Mexico, which is probably why it was carried to the Huerfano River valley by Hispano settlers.²⁵ After exposure to Euro-American traditions,

flat-roofed houses became modified by the addition of framed, shingled roofs above the parapeted walls. These innovations quickly became fashionable with both Anglo and Hispanic residents, who superimposed them upon the traditional adobe construction.²⁶

At this point, Hispano settlers Victor and Juliana Montoya were owners of a six-room adobe, substantial sheep ranching facilities, hay meadows, water rights, and an apple orchard: all hallmarks of a successful ranching career in the local Hispanic culture. It is likely that, at this time, windows in the adobe were minimal.²⁷ After at least thirty years on the property, the Montoyas retired and sold everything to the Farises.

With the change of ownership, the architectural evolution of the Montoya Ranch building continued, documenting the social and economic changes of the times. The Farises were also immigrants, from Lebanon rather than New Mexico. As a newly married young couple, they were looking for economic opportunity as well. Taking over the established Montoya sheep ranch, and in light of the recent death of William Harmes, the longtime local storekeeper and postmaster, the

but no other examples"). A photo from the Denver Public Library Western History/Genealogy Digital Collection identifies a rock building built in 1873 used as a jail to house prisoners in a "deep cellar rock walled" basement with a "ladder used for going down and up." Located northwest of Walsenburg in Huerfano County, Colorado, this structure would be in the vicinity of Montoya Ranch. Call No. X-14000, Identifier F6757 DPLW.

²³ Mondragón-Valdéz 2000: sec. E, p. 11.

²⁴ McAlester 2004: 132.

²⁵ McAlester 2004: 131.

²⁶ McAlester 2004: 130. See photo examples, McAlester 2004: 136-37.

²⁷ Mondragón-Valdéz 2000: sec. E, p. 10.

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Farises made changes and additions to the Montoya Ranch building to accommodate a general store and post office, adding or changing doors and windows, and adding a porch to the north façade.²⁸

Each architectural modification of the building throughout the ca. 1869-1943 period of historical significance documents social and economic influences of the time. The rare full basement is highly significant and may be the only example in Colorado and New Mexico.²⁹ The size and relatively good condition of this adobe building make it a remarkably rare and uncommonly fine example of superior adobe workmanship.

Today significant concentrations [of Spanish Colonial architecture] remain only in... a few rural communities in Texas and New Mexico. Almost all surviving examples show Anglo-influenced modifications from the mid- and late 19th century. Many have also suffered from 20th-century renovation and overly zealous restoration...relatively unaltered examples from the 19th century survive principally in rural areas, from which they are fast disappearing through neglect and decay.³⁰

The Montoya Ranch adobe was occupied by two families, the Montoyas and the Farises, who engaged in sheep ranching and grew crops. The property also has an extensive example of sheep pens and corrals and a shepherd's cabin, speaking to the historic sheep ranching industry. As agriculture was the primary industry during this period of time, it contributes to the understanding of regional sheep ranching. It also provides an example of a type of adobe single-family dwelling used by Hispano families in the Huerfano Valley.

Montoya Ranch possesses physical features that convey its importance to Hispano settlement history. The site, building, and adjacent structures possess the integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association required to convey its historical and architectural significance.

Comparable Properties and State Significance

There are few of Colorado's early Hispano adobe, single-family buildings listed on the State or National Register, although these resources were once quite common. The Montoya Ranch adobe is in a linear plan, which was the most typical layout for early Hispano residences. After initial settlement, these residences sometimes added on rooms to create an L or U-plan, and others added a second story, which often included a gabled roof as the building styles incorporated stylistic trends of American builders.³¹ While the Montoya property retained in a linear form, it did adapt to changing uses and needs through additional rooms and modification of a flat roof to a hipped roof.

Of the adobe residential buildings from the same time-period previously listed in Colorado, they tend to fall into three categories: fort complexes, two-story Americanized homes of prominent Coloradans from the Frontier period, and a few linear-plan residences that were a part of ranch complexes. The various forts along the Colorado and New Mexico border housed troops and often various commercial enterprises for the community that developed as a result. The two examples of this property type are the 1858 & 1875 Fort Garland (National Register listed in 1970, NRIS 70000156) and the 1862 Francisco Plaza (National Register listed in 1986, NRIS 86002950). While very different in form, they do provide insight into a large-scale interpretation of a mixed-use interpretation of Territorial Adobe style. The two-story Americanized homes that are listed on the State or National Registers in Colorado tend to be associated with prominent state or local leaders in an area. These people tend to have been men of American extraction that either built a more Americanized home using adobe materials or had modified a single-story linear Hispano residence by adding a second story and Americanized stylistic elements (usually Gothic-Revival treatments). These properties in Colorado include those at Boggsville (National Register listed in 1986, NRIS 86002841), the Baca House and Outbuilding (National Register listed in 1970, NRIS 70000165), the Butler House (National Register listed in 1984, NRIS 84000880). Each of these properties is

²⁸ Front porch additions to Hispano adobe buildings are symbolic of Hispano communities attempting to integrate with more mainstream American cultural identity. Spanish houses normally had porches on the interior, or courtyard side of the building. McAlester 2004: 130.

²⁹ Email from Dr. Chris Wilson, Professor, University of New Mexico, to Vicky Bunsen Doucette dated June 7, 2011.

Interview with Rick Manzanaras, Director, Fort Garland Museum. May 2, 2011.

³⁰ McAlester 2004: 132.

³¹ Mondragón-Valdéz 2000: sec. F, p. 43-44.

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from a similar settlement period, but represent different architectural stylistic forms and ethnic heritage than the Montoya Ranch property. In short, both the look and areas of significance differ from Montoya.

Of the properties that are most similar to Montoya, only one is listed on the National Register, and the other two that the Colorado State Historic Preservation Office are aware of may not retain the integrity required to meet either the State or National Register requirements. The Corpus Gallegos Homestead (5CT.180, listed as a Colorado Centennial Farm in 1990) is a part of a continually used ranching complex, but has not been formally evaluated for listing on either register. The Jose Prudencio Garcia Homestead (5SH.1906) has a very similar early history to Montoya, and while there has been no formal determination of eligibility, the initial field assessment in 2000 was that subsequent non-Hispano modifications to the property precluded eligibility at that time. The Trujillo Homesteads (National Register listed in 2004, NRIS 03001544) are a part of a Hispano district that are similar to Montoya in that they were eventually abandoned and left as monuments to the past on the landscape. The adobe homestead part of the property has completely deteriorated and that part of the property is only eligible for its information potential as an archaeological resource.

Of these properties, Montoya Ranch represents a resource that is greatly under-represented in the state. As it is still intact, as are a number of its associated period resources (such as the sheep complex), this is currently the best property in the state to tell the story of early Hispano settlement in a rural area and how life and the places that those people lived in adapted as part of a small Colorado town.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

Historic Overview of the Talpa, Huerfano County area in Colorado

At an elevation of 6,650 feet, the unincorporated town of Farisita is located on the north bank of the Huerfano River near the confluence with Turkey Creek (also known historically as Trujillo Creek). As the lifeblood of the region, the Huerfano River drains easterly into the Arkansas River. Its waters historically turned the valley into an arable landscape. The upper soil surface of the Valley or basin is predominately a softer red and yellow sandy clay and marls. The Sheep and Silver Mountains to the south are mirrored by the Wet Mountains to the northwest.

Native Americans were first to leave footprints and place names along trails in the Huerfano Valley that were then followed by explorers and finally Hispanic settlers as they traveled along routes northward from New Mexico. One of the best-known and most often used routes was the Sangre de Cristo Pass. Located along this route and along the historic Trappers' Trail, is Farisita, once called Talpa or sometimes Fort Talpa, and even earlier simply referred to as Huerfano Cañon.

Talpa is located within the boundaries of the Vigil-St. Vrain land grant. As many of its earliest residents most likely arrived from Mora County, New Mexico, this area historically relates to Spanish culture. Today this corner of Colorado has virtually been forgotten. Although the history dates back much further than discussed here, this historic context begins in the early 1800s. Historically, Spain and then Mexico each had its turn in governing this part of Colorado. Records, deeds, diaries and documents of the past are therefore found in Colorado, New Mexico, Mexico, and even Spanish archives.

Mexico gained independence from Spain in 1821. Yet despite the Mexican government attempts to lure settlers through generous land grants, by the 1840s, it had failed to populate and protect its northernmost lands. With the end of the Mexican war in 1846, Mexico lost the Southwest to the United States. The 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo entitled Mexican land owners the rights and title to their land. But now under the governance of the United States, those who had received land grants from the Mexican or Spanish governments were required to confirm their claims under United States law. Meanwhile, settlers, squatters and homesteaders continued to arrive and settle in the Huerfano Valley on these contested lands.

According to historian María Mondragón-Valdéz: "The formative settlement period from 1851-78 marked the early migration of Hispanos from Taos Valley, the establishment of fortified plazas, and the shaping of the agro-pastoral landscape."³² The built environment during these years in southern Colorado exhibits forms of Hispano vernacular

³² Mondragón-Valdéz 2000: sec. E, p. 1.

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architecture and a historic cultural landscape that is undeniably southwestern, unique to this part of the United States and Colorado and deserving of attention in consideration of preservation efforts.

Old Spanish records indicate that as far back as 1598 Juan de Oñate reported gold discoveries in the vicinity of the San Luis Valley and may have traveled even further north. In 1664 Juan de Archuleta led a Spanish excursion into what is now Colorado. He left a journal in which he mentioned the names of Colorado rivers, creeks, and mountains, indicating that the Spanish had already explored parts of southern Colorado. In 1706, Juan de Ulibarri and forty soldiers traveled north to the Arkansas River, skirting the Spanish Peaks and claimed the Rio Grande and Arkansas drainages for King Philip V of Spain. In 1779 Juan Bautista de Anza cornered Chief Cuerno Verde (Green Horn) and his Comanches at what is still called Greenhorn Creek. From de Anza's diary entries, historian Ronald Kessler reconstructed the route and states that when returning to Santa Fe, de Anza's troops "could not help but have crossed (the Huerfano River) on his way back to the Sangre de Cristo range, at which point Road 69 would have crossed the de Anza route."³³ Other Spanish and Mexican expeditions have gone unrecorded in this area and although French explorers also explored the area, it is well documented that Hispanics were the first Europeans to explore, map, describe, and settle the area.³⁴

By 1818 Spain recognized that its northernmost province was, "in its present position, one of the most vulnerable points of the Provincias."³⁵ With the U.S. acquisition of the Louisiana Territory in 1803, Spain's uncontested dominion in the borderlands became seriously jeopardized. The responsibility to maintain security and protection fell directly upon Lieutenant Colonel Facundo Melgares, the last Spanish governor of New Mexico and best known for arresting Lieutenant Zebulon Pike. Sangre de Cristo Pass had been designated as one of three routes into New Mexico viewed as most suitable to circumvent any foreign intrusion. In 1820-21, Melgares ordered a fort to be built to guard against American invasion. To be cost-effective, he constructed temporary rather than permanent installations. Plans were sent to Viceroy Juan Ruiz de Apodaca, the Conde de Venbadito. The viceroy rejected the buildings because they were "unsuitable to the terrain" and less than a year after beginning, Melgares was forced to halt construction.³⁶

In 1822, the Glenn and Fowler trapping party followed a fairly well-established road, skirting the eastern base of Green Horn Mountain, crossing the main range by way of the Sangre de Cristo Pass. Fowler's diary entry for Sunday, February 3, 1822 reads: "Set out Early about South along the foot of the mountains for about ten miles to a Crick [and] about five miles [further] to Whar there the Remains of a Spanish fort to apperence ocepied about one year back—Hear We Camped for the night..."³⁷

Beginning around 1930, the Montoya Ranch adobe building began to be confused with the 1820 Melgares fort. The building was known among local Talpa residents as "Fort Talpa" and the WPA Writers Program authors and researchers apparently decided that the building must be the 1820 Spanish fort and reported it as such in their travelogue of Colorado.³⁸ Later books on Colorado military forts repeated the same information.³⁹ Strategically, it would not make sense for Melgares to build his fort any place but near the mountain passes where intruders could be seen and intercepted before entering Spanish territory. Fowler's description also indicates a location in or close to the mountains. Early twentieth century eye-witness accounts described ruins of the Melgares fort located southwest of Talpa on a butte overlooking Oak Creek.⁴⁰ The same book that confused Fort Talpa as an 1820 Spanish outpost also described the likely location of the Melgares fort:

³³ Kessler 1994: 31.

³⁴ EchoHawk 2011.

³⁵ Gomez 2004.

³⁶ Gomez 2004.

³⁷ Fowler quoted in Coues 1970.

³⁸ Writers' Program of the Work Projects Administration 1941: 350.

³⁹ See, e.g., Roberts, Robert B. *Encyclopedia of Historic Forts: The Military, Pioneer and Trading Posts of the United States: 115*. New York: MacMillan Publishing Co. 1988; Spurr, Dick & Wendy. *Historic Forts of Colorado*. Grand Junction, Colorado: Centennial Publications, 1994: 70. Another author noted that Fort Talpa was probably not the "Old Spanish Fort" built by Governor Melgares. Brandes, T. Donald. *Military Posts of Colorado*. Fort Collins, Colorado: The Old Army Press, 1973: 6.

⁴⁰ Oral Interview of Jeanette Thach 1979; Owen 1975: 128.

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Left from Badito on a dirt road paralleling Oak Creek, to the crumbling ruin of an old SPANISH FORT, 7m. The faint triangular outline of the walls crowns a hill overlooking Oak Creek and commands a good view of the valley where the old Taos Trail wound from Badito south to Sangre de Cristo Pass. The fort was built between 1819-20 at the order of Don Facundo Melagres, Spanish Governor of New Mexico, to guard the pass against American invasion.⁴¹

Other visitors came and went by way of Talpa and eventually Trappers Trail over the Sangre de Cristo Pass became a road. Gwinn Harris Heap observed in 1853: "An excellent wagon road might be made over these mountains by the Sangre de Cristo Pass," and by the end of summer a road had been made.⁴² But twenty-five years later it remained rough to travel: "There is at present very little snow on the road, but it is covered with an eruption of stones, varying in size from a peanut to a 'prairie schooner'... But notwithstanding all this, the freight teams seem to get through somehow."⁴³

In addition to Trapper's Trail, or Taos Trail, and the Santa Fe Trail, access and transportation modes improved year by year, specifically around 1860-70. Although not an official stage stop, the Huerfano Cañon area undoubtedly had its share of traffic. The 1869 survey shows a clear road from Badito west past the Huerfano Cañon area, passing along the present-day Highway 69 alignment.⁴⁴

Under the 1866 contract for Route No. 17001, William Jones — known as "One-armed" Jones — publicized that his weekly mail transport route for points along the way from Denver to Santa Fe over the Sangre de Cristo Pass was 150 miles and two days shorter than any other line. His two-mule buckboards for mail, express freight and passengers went south from Pueblo to the settlement on the St. Charles River to Hermosilla on the Huerfano and from there west over the pass to Fort Garland.⁴⁵ In 1867, Joseph Davis chose locations on streams that fed into the Arkansas from the south: the St. Charles (San Carlos), Muddy, Greenhorn, Huerfano, Santa Clara, Apishapa, and the Chicosa, which was the last station before Trinidad. "California horses were used on this route, small, wiry animals, very much like the Texas mustang with remarkable endurance and speed."⁴⁶

However, from the moment of its inception, stage lines over the Sangre de Cristo Pass existed in the shadow of the Denver and Rio Grande's plan to build west from Cucharas, through Walsenburg, and over the adjacent Veta Pass to Fort Garland. Probably the last stage line over the Sangre de Cristo pass was operated by Harley Sanderson. His Southern Overland Mail and Express Company with a principal office in Pueblo went from Cucharas to Badito before going over Sangre de Cristo Pass into the San Luis Valley.⁴⁷ The last Sanderson coach to run south out of Pueblo left on the morning of Wednesday, May 3, 1876. Without a stage line, nor the railroad, the Talpa area languished.

Early Conflicts and Hispano Settlement

Similar to other locations between the Huerfano River valley and Taos, New Mexico, villages throughout the region required clay for adobe construction and rocks for foundations. Early settlers found these basic building materials in the Huerfano Valley. Due to unexpected attacks by Native Americans in the area, "Fortified ranch houses became numerous in the sixties and seventies of the last century."⁴⁸ John Williams Gunnison visited a Mexican settlement in 1853 near Badito after crossing the Huerfano River and near the base of the mountain, and said:

The houses are built of adobe or sun-dried bricks, with-out windows or other openings than a single door, in entering which a man of six feet in stature must bow very low. In front of each house is enclosed a small space of ground, twenty yards in width, by poles planted in the earth and lashed to horizontal strips by rawhide thongs.

⁴¹ Writers' Program of the Work Projects Administration 1941: 350.

⁴² Kessler 1998: 166. The road from Badito west past Talpa, along today's alignment of State Highway 69, is shown on the Surveyor General's Survey Plat, T. 26 S., R. 69 W. 1870.

⁴³ *Colorado Daily Chieftain*. Pueblo, Colorado. Mar. 20, 1878.

⁴⁴ Surveyor General's Survey Plat, T. 26. S., R.69 W. 1870.

⁴⁵ Taylor 1971: 118.

⁴⁶ Taylor 1971: 139.

⁴⁷ Taylor 1971: 172.

⁴⁸ Albright 1984.

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These picketed yards are intended as a protection against Indians — the Utes having killed some of their cattle last year, destroyed their grain, and stolen their horses.⁴⁹

Many other contemporary accounts reference the dangerous relations between Huerfano Valley settlers and Native Americans. On October 8, 1866, Hiram Vasquez, who had lived in the Huerfano Valley, but then was residing in La Veta, rode to Fort Garland with a letter in urgent appeal for military protection against a band of Jicarilla Apaches who had stolen his horses and wounded the herders. He also reported depredations in the Valley by the Moache Ute Chief Ka-ni-ache and his band: "Yesterday morning they attacked the Badito — took all the stock from that place and cleaned everything from that to the head of the Huerfano in the way stock, and every description of movable property — also killed a German and Mexican, took as captives Mrs. McClure and her four children."

When Chief Ouray heard of the attacks, he went to Fort Garland to assure the military he had no intention of fighting. Colonel Alexander had followed Chief Ka-ni-ache with troops, and a confrontation resulted with death and injury to both parties. Chief Ouray did his utmost to bring the hostilities to a halt, and successfully enticed Ka-ni-ache to cease his forays, turn over the captives and join Ouray in peace.⁵⁰

An 1868 article in the *Colorado Pueblo Chieftain* read:

IN TIME OF PEACE PREPARE FOR WAR. Mr. A. T. Seibering, of Badito was in town last Monday and bought a good supply of ammunition to defend his ranch from Indians, in case of an outbreak by the Utes. All other ranchmen should do the same. "It is too late to pray when the devil comes." It is also too late to lay in means of defense after the Indians have come.⁵¹

This was still a concern six years later:

Mr. John Francisco brings news from the Spanish Peaks that a few days since a number of Apaches made their appearance in the Cucharas, shot a herder through the arm with an arrow, and killed a number of sheep.⁵²

Robert Percy Owen, who lived in the upper Huerfano Valley from 1892-1978, wrote:

Where the road [State Highway 69] crosses Turkey Creek there used to be a building which was reported to be a fort at one time. This sat close to the bottom of the hill.⁵³

Glenn Scott referenced the adobe building as Fort Talpa, stating that settlers used it for protection against Indian attack.⁵⁴

Vigil-St. Vrain Land Grant

When Mexico won independence from Spain in 1821, Gov. Manuel Armijo attempted to reinforce Mexican claims to what is now part of Colorado by making land grants to attract settlers. Cornelio Vigil and Ceran St. Vrain petitioned Gov. Armijo and received a grant of land on December 8, 1843. Their petition stated they had:

examined and registered with great care the land embraced within the Huerfano, Cucharas, Apishapa Rivers to their junction with the Arkansas and Las Animas Rivers, and finding sufficient fertile land for cultivation, an abundance of pasture and water, and all that is required for a flourishing establishment, and for raising cattle and sheep, and being satisfied therewith, and certain that it is public land, we have not hesitated to apply to your Excellency, praying you to be pleased, by an act of justice, to grant to each one of us a tract of land in the above

⁴⁹ Kessler 1998: 200.

⁵⁰ Albright 1984.

⁵¹ *Colorado Pueblo Chieftain*, Jun. 25, 1868.

⁵² *Colorado Weekly Chieftain*. Aug. 13, 1874.

⁵³ Owens 1975: 130.

⁵⁴ Scott 1999: 49.

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mentioned locality, protesting that in the coming spring we will commence operations, which will be continued until the colony shall be established and settled.⁵⁵

Five years later in 1848, the defeated Mexican Republic signed the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo with the United States. An American judicial system ignorant of traditional Spanish-Mexican land tenure and legal customs brought into question and often abrogated land titles of former Mexican citizens throughout the Southwest, including that of Vigil and St. Vrain. According to historian María Mondragón-Valdéz: "All too often the process of invalidating land titles involved legal chicanery. Eventually, the courts diminished or denied a majority of the Spanish/Mexican land claims."⁵⁶

Talpa is located on the Vigil-St. Vrain Land Grant. Also called the Las Animas Grant, it was the most significant of the grants made by the last governor of New Mexico. However, when presenting claims to the United States Surveyor General's Office for confirmation, it was not confirmed for the full extent claimed. Quoting Mexican Colonization Law as the basis of the decision, the claim was limited to eleven square leagues per original individual. Congress thereby confirmed the grant to the extent of twenty-two leagues by Act approved June 21, 1860.⁵⁷ The claimants appealed the decision, contending that the Las Animas Grant was an *empresario* grant (where one person was granted permission to settle a large tract of land in exchange for agreeing to recruit and take responsibility for settlers) and such grants were not subject to the eleven square league limitation. As one of three types of grants issued by Mexico, the petitioner of an *empresario* was allowed to divide, sell, and promise settlers title under his domain. In fact, St. Vrain had, in good faith, given promises of titles to a number of settlers to whom he had sold tracts, and to whom he was legally bound to give a valid title.⁵⁸ Additionally, with the permission of St. Vrain, Richard L. Wooten attempted to form a colony on the Huerfano River in 1852, but this endeavor failed in the spring 1854 when Native Americans killed seven or eight of the inhabitants and drove the balance off the land.⁵⁹ The claimants' *empresario* argument was not upheld, but the court did agree to subtract acreage already sold from the twenty-two square leagues. Regardless, the original claimants, many being descendants of Vigil and St. Vrain, did not gain much from the original land grant decree.

Hispano Settlement of the Huerfano Valley and Talpa Area

According to some sources, some Mexicans crossed the Continental Divide in the 1830s, marrying Native American women and beginning to farm the Huerfano Valley.⁶⁰ Even though the Huerfano Valley became part of the United States in 1848, there appear to be very few records documenting land conveyances. It may be that many people were settling the Vigil-St. Vrain land grant based on verbal promises or a communal understanding that Spanish property principles would be recognized. Review of the Huerfano County land records shows a number of leases and land conveyances that appear to rest on the Mexican land grant claims, which were declared invalid in 1874.⁶¹ By the 1870 census, at least 2,300 people were recorded in Huerfano County, most of them with Spanish surnames.⁶² Clearly there was a great deal of Hispano settlement prior to 1870, even though land ownership documentation does not exist for the vast majority of these settlers. "The Huerfano River at that time was still the dividing line, as to customs and habits of people who had worked north from Mexico — and citizens of the United States traveling south.... Here was a country in the southern division of the Territory of Colorado, in 1865, with a population of two thousand Mexican people and about 25 Americans."⁶³ Further documentation of this settlement in the Talpa and Badito area exists in the form of water rights appropriated between 1862 to 1866 and into the 1870s.⁶⁴

⁵⁵ Morrow 1979: 127.

⁵⁶ Mondragón-Valdéz 2000: sec. E, p. 8.

⁵⁷ Bowden 2004.

⁵⁸ Morrow 1979: 133.

⁵⁹ Bowden 2004.

⁶⁰ See oral interview of Jeanette Thach 1979.

⁶¹ Book 1, pages 142-284; Book 2, Huerfano County Clerk & Recorder (conveyances dated 1859 through the 1860s).

⁶² U.S. Census, accessed April-June 2011 at <http://www.usgwarchives.net/co/huerfano/census/>.

⁶³ Albright 1984.

⁶⁴ Water rights were appropriated from 1862 to 1866 by Spanish-surnamed farmers in the Badito and Huerfano Cañon area. See water rights data bases at <http://cdss.state.co.us/DNN/>.

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The backdrop for this Hispano settlement during the 1860s was the legal controversy over the validity the Vigil-St. Vrain land grant. While the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo promised to honor claims recognized under Mexican law, there were many ambiguities with the Vigil-St. Vrain claim, making it difficult to honor prior claims with any degree of certainty. In 1860, Congress directed the General Land office and U. S. Department of Interior to settle the claims within this land grant, and later, in 1869, directed that a survey be completed by the Surveyor General's Office that would document the valid derivative claims.⁶⁵ No Hispano settlers in the upper Huerfano Valley obtained title to property as a result of the settlement of land grant claims. In the Talpa area, the only derivative claim eventually declared valid was William Craig's claim near Badito.⁶⁶

The meandering course of the Huerfano, said to be the finest stream in Colorado, with its wide 'bottoms' dotted here and there with human habitations as far as one could see, enclosed by low but regular bluffs, was a sight which eclipsed the former...At the foot of the slope of the divide between St. Charles and the Huerfano, nearest the latter, is a strip of land 12 miles or more in length and averaging 2 miles in width, as perfectly adapted to agricultural purposes as any I have seen in the territory. I thought that this would be a capital place to locate two or three Colonies; but was surprised that not one house, or other evidence of improvement, was to be seen anywhere outside the low bottom of the Huerfano. I inquired of J.B. Rice, at whose residence I stopped over night, why it was that this beautiful tract had not been claimed before this time? His reply was: "It is a part of the infernal Las Animas Grant and cannot be settled by preemption or homestead. The majority of the settlers have heretofore been too scantily supplied with means to purchase of the grantees, besides they could not if they wished to, as the grant has been in such an unsettled state since its confirmation that the grantees are still unable to convey bona fide titles to their lands."⁶⁷

When the area was surveyed in 1869 to 1870, very few buildings or structures were documented, even though hundreds of people lived in the area at the time. The surveyor's field notes for the Talpa area state: "There is a considerable quantity of agricultural land in this Tsp [Township] bordering on the streams, & nearly all occupied by Americans & Mexicans."⁶⁸ While the purpose of the survey did not include documentation of existing structures, a few structures are drawn on the map near Badito, and two adobes are included on the survey very close to the Montoya Ranch location in T.69S., R26W, one of which appears at the location of the present-day Garcia family homestead.⁶⁹ Of interest, the only road clearly documented on the surveys in 1869 runs along the north side of the Huerfano River from Badito, through the Talpa area, and crosses the river around the current location of Gardner. The 1869 road appears to lie on the present-day alignment of State Highway 69. The 1869 survey did not indicate a road crossing the Huerfano River at Badito.

Land Patents During Hispano Settlement Period

Review of United States land patents in Huerfano County indicates that a concentration of parcels were patented around the Montoya Ranch site in the 1870s with the remainder of the land unpatented for miles around (See Table 1).⁷⁰ There is also a concentration of patents in the Badito area. The concentration of patents issued at these two adjacent areas far exceeds the number of patents issued during these early decades in the remainder of the six townships examined. All of the patentees had Spanish names, except for a few men who appear to have married Spanish women and settled within the Hispano community. While patents issued in the 1870s and early 1880s all around the east half of Section 35, the Montoya Ranch parcel, no patent issued for the Montoya Ranch parcel until 1887. The 160-acre Montoya Ranch and the adjacent 640-acre School Section have no private land ownership documents associated with them during the early period of settlement.

⁶⁵ Acts of Jun. 21, 1860, 12 Stat. 71, and Feb. 25, 1869, 15 Stat. 275. Act of Feb. 25, 1869, 15 Stat. 275, 440.

⁶⁶ Vigil-St. Vrain Land Grant, from Morris F. Taylor, "The Leitensdorfer Claim in the Vigil and St. Vrain Grant," *Spanish and Mexican Land Grants and the Law*, ed., Malcolm Ebright (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1994).

⁶⁷ *Colorado Chieftain*, Pueblo, Colorado, Mar. 23, 1871: 3:2.

⁶⁸ Survey Book, Vol. 1, page 762 (Jan. 12, 1870), Public Records of the Huerfano County Clerk and Recorder.

⁶⁹ Surveyor General's Survey Plat, T. 26 S., R. 69 W. 1870.

⁷⁰ U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management, General Land Office Records. Land patent records were examined for the following six townships: Township 26 South, Ranges 68, 69 and 70, Township 27 South, Ranges 68, 69 and 70. This area includes Badito, Talpa, Gardner and townships north and south of the Huerfano River.

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In order for these patents to have been issued, the patentees were required to improve and work the land for a least five years prior to patent. Therefore, the 1874 patentees claimed to have settled the subject parcels by at least 1869. In fact, the Garcias appropriated water rights in the area in 1866 and the School Section Ditch was appropriated in the section immediately east of the Montoya Ranch adobe in 1866. Another emigrant from New Mexico, William Harmes, appropriated his ditch in 1871. The appropriation dates of these water rights all around the site of the Montoya Ranch adobe indicates significant settlement and agricultural activity as early as 1866.⁷¹ The only earlier water rights appropriated in these townships are those near Badito, some of which were appropriated between 1862 and 1865.⁷²

William L. Harmes was born on March 14, 1836, in Prussia, now part of Germany. He met and married his wife Camilla Gonzales in Taos, New Mexico, in February 1861.⁷³ At that time, Harmes was a Lutheran, documented as an inhabitant of Pennsylvania. A daughter Lucinda was born to the couple in Colorado City in 1867. They arrived in Huerfano County sometime prior to 1869.⁷⁴ 1880 census records describe William as "white" and his wife and children as "Mexican."

Although his wife was Hispanic and his children and grandchildren spoke Spanish, William maintained his German identity as well. His great-grandson refers to him as "my great grandpa that was from Germany, who came to Talpa."⁷⁵ Being a mixed-religious household, Camilla may have not been a devout Catholic after marrying William. Their great-great-grandson commented, "the Harmes also were Catholics. But not like the Martinez's. Now those were Catholics!"⁷⁶

Harmes was well known in the area and his family had many land holdings. Jeanette Thatch refers to "Harmes Canyon, on a branch of the Sange de Cristo Trail which lead right down to where Talpa (Farisita) was to be and the main trail led to Badito." According to Antonio Harmes, "from there on they spread out on Yellowstone and all of that, you see. Part of that Sheep Mountain use to belong to my granddad [Luis Harmes] — the biggest part of it."⁷⁷

William L. Harmes opened the first United States Post Office in Huerfano Cañon in 1878, which "moved to Talpa" in 1890.⁷⁸ The 1890 Talpa post office is documented in historical photo H011.⁷⁹ Postal records indicate that Harmes' post office from 1878 to 1890 was north of the Huerfano River and one mile west of Turkey Creek, which would have been a

⁷¹ "One of the goals of the villagers. . . was to construct central irrigation ditches, or *acequias*, and an interrelated network of laterals, or *sangrias*. Like building techniques, the *pobladores* transferred *acequia* traditions from northern New Mexico into the highlands of southern Colorado. While the origins of the *acequia* nomenclature and some practices are rooted in the Moorish occupation of Spain, the techniques and infrastructure were hybridized by Roman contact with the Spanish and Spanish contact with Pueblos in the Rio Arriba." Mondragón-Valdéz 2000: sec. E, p. 12.

⁷² All water right data accessed from the Colorado Division of Water Resources website, <http://cdss.state.co.us/DNN/WaterRights/tabid/76/Default.aspx>.

⁷³ William L. Harmes is also listed as a Civil War veteran during the same time he was marrying in New Mexico. See *Huerfano County Veterans*.

⁷⁴ The Harmes family does not appear in the Huerfano County 1870 census, but the 1880 census indicates that Harmes children were born in Colorado starting in 1864 (Matilda was 16 years old in 1880). *1880 Census, Harmes Family*. The 1880 census also locates the Harmes family adjacent to Victor Montoya and the Garcia clan in Huerfano Cañon.

⁷⁵ Oral Interview of Antonio Harmes 1979.

⁷⁶ Oral Interview of Antonio Harmes 1979.

⁷⁷ Oral Interview of Antonio Harmes 1979. Luis took over his father's store after his father died in December 1898. Luis was robbed at the store by escaped Cañon City convicts on Sept. 19, 1899. "Daring Holdup at Talpa," *Denver Times*. Sept 19, 1899: p. 2, col. 4. Luis is listed in the 1880 census as a "Sheep Br" and obtained patent to 320 acres south of Talpa in 1889 and 1891. *1880 Census, Harmes Family*; U.S. Patent, Certificate No. 2238, dated Feb 6, 1889; U.S. Patent, Certificate No. 6392, dated Jan. 3, 1891.

⁷⁸ Email from Roger Rydberg, Colorado Postal History Society, to Vicky Bunsen Doucette, dated June 14, 2011. Mr. Rydberg researched the postmasters and locations in the Huerfano Cañon, Talpa and Farisita area using the archives held in the estate of William H. Bauer (deceased), one of the authors of *Colorado Post Offices 1859-1989*.

⁷⁹ Photo H011 is labeled on the back as ca. 1880. This appears to be incorrect, since the name Talpa was not used prior to 1890 and because the three boys in the lower left of the photo are identified as William Harmes' sons. Given their dates of birth, the photo would have to have been taken in 1890, not 1880. In 1880 Charles August and William Herman were 8 and 3 years old respectively. *1880 Census, Harmes Family*.

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different location from Montoya Ranch, perhaps located in the Harmes home.⁸⁰ By 1880, Huerfano Cañon was served by Star Route No. 38205, a weekly contract mail delivery route that ran from Alamosa to Gardner and from Gardner to Walsenburg.⁸¹

In addition to his commercial pursuits as grocer and postmaster, William was a member of the Walsenburg Blue Masonic Masons. He was a precinct officer from 1889 to 1890, a county commissioner for the Talpa district from 1895 to 1898, and for many years served as president of the District #8 local school board.⁸² In 1893, during the time he may have been active in this role, there were sixty-five students in the district and by 1898, the year he died, and it had increased to 165.

Tragedy struck the Harmes family in 1893 when William and Camilla's four grandchildren born to their daughter Emilia and her husband Joseph Sears died in a diphtheria epidemic that rolled through the Turkey Creek area in the spring.⁸³ Tragedy struck again when Mr. Harmes passed away after one of his sons accidentally shot him in the store.⁸⁴ The year of his death, there are reports that the family had experienced several burglaries in the fall. This may have precipitated having a gun on hand for protection. "It happened accidentally. He was cleaning a gun and the old man was reading the paper, you see. And he didn't examine the gun right and it had a shell and he was cleaning it and he shot the old man....the one that shot him was named August Harmes."⁸⁵ Following is an account of the incident and the life of William L. Harmes from an unidentified newspaper sometime after his death:

The whole county was shocked and grieved to hear of the death of William L. Harmes last Thursday afternoon at four o'clock. Not only was his death a shock, but the dreadful manner in which it occurred was distressing in the extreme. He was sitting in his store at Talpa (Colorado) reading and his two sons, Louis and August, were over by the counter examining a pistol and laughing and talking. August, thinking all the chambers of the pistol were empty began twirling and snapping the weapon when it was discharged and the bullet entered Mr. Harmes' head just below the right temple, making a fearful wound from which the blood fairly gushed. He never spoke after the shot and died in about 15 minutes. The bullet could be felt under the skin behind the left ear. Only a moment before the accident young August pointed the pistol at himself and snapped it. The poor boy was almost crazed with grief when he found that he had killed his father.

Grief and confusion reigned to its utmost among the female members of the family. Immediately after the accident, Louis Harmes and Joe Sears, son and son-in-law respectfully of the deceased, came down to Walsenburg with the sad news and preparations began at once for his burial by the Masons, of which order he was a member. He was buried in the cemetery here last Saturday afternoon in the presence of a large assemblage of sympathizing friends of the family.

Mr. Harmes has for many years been one of the leading citizens of the county and one of its land marks. He was 65 years old, was born in Germany and for several years of his young manhood was a seaman. He first came to this country in the early fifties and was once sheriff of El Paso county. From El Paso he went to Taos, N.M.; where, in about 1860, he married Senorita Camile Gonzalez, who still survives him; the same Father Uzell who is here in Walsenburg now performing the ceremony. He then went back to El Paso County where several of his children were born. He came to Huerfano County in about 1869 and in 1871 was placed in charge of Walsen & Levy's

⁸⁰ Huerfano Cañon post office was established March 4, 1878. The location is documented in U.S. Post Office records as Sec. 36, T26S R69W, 1/8 mile north of Huerfano River, one mile west of Turkey Creek. Section 36 of this township is actually east of Turkey Creek, so an error exists somewhere. Note that Harmes was running a grocery out of his home by 1877. License No. 365 Walsen & Levy, Aug. 11, 1877 to Nov. 11, 1877, Grocery, Huerfano Cañon at the house Wm. L. Harmes; License No. 387 Walsen & Levy, Nov. 11, 1877 to Aug. 11, 1878, Grocery, Huerfano Cañon P. O., *Record Book: 1877 through 1915*, Tiley Local History Center, Huerfano County Historical Society (researched by Carolyn Newman, President).

⁸¹ Harlan 1976: 153.

⁸² *Register of County Officers, Huerfano County, Colorado*, accessed by Carolyn Newman, President, Huerfano County Historical Society, in the Alton M. Tiley Local History Center, Walsenburg, Colorado.

⁸³ *Huerfano County, Colorado, News Of The Day, 1890-1899*.

⁸⁴ *The Walsenburg World*, Dec. 22, 1898, p. 1, col. 2; *The Advertiser*. La Veta, Colorado, Dec. 17, 1898.

⁸⁵ Oral Interview of Antonio Harmes 1979.

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store at Talpa, which later on was A. Levy's alone. Levy sold out to him about ten years ago and he has since conducted the business himself very successfully. He was elected County Commissioner in 1894 and served during his term as chairman of the board. He leaves nine children — six sons and three daughters— and a wife to mourn his death. Mr. Harmes was one of the most popular and best known men we ever saw. He was known throughout the length and breadth of the county as "The King of Talpa." Everywhere you went last Thursday evening you could hear expressions of regret of his death and everyone seemed to feel a personal loss. He had many admirable traits of character that always made him friends — among them being his genial, jovial disposition and his warm, open-handed hospitality. We extend our sincerest sympathy and condolence to the bereaved family. For a great deal of facts and data of the above article we are indebted to A. Levy and H.B. Wise.⁸⁶

After William's death, his son Luis Narciso Harmes took over the store until Asperidon and Louise Faris bought the Montoya Ranch property and operated the local general store into the 1930s.⁸⁷ After Mr. Harmes died, his daughter Isabel Harmes became postmaster from 1899 to 1910.⁸⁸

It is significant that no patents were issued earlier than 1874. It was that year that U.S. courts made their decision on the derivative claims of the Vigil-St. Vrain, denying all but a few claims.⁸⁹ Of the thousands of Spanish settlers in the land grant area, a few were following the legal and political developments and promptly filed their claims under the U.S. Homestead Act when the Spanish land grant claim largely failed. Of the early claimants listed in Table 1, most do not show up in later records or are shown in other locations. The Garcia brothers and their wives, hired hands and children appear in the 1870 and 1880 censuses, as well as in the tax rolls, land ownership records and water rights records. The oldest brother, Pedro Antonio Garcia, with a large family and larger land holdings, may have been the locally recognized leader or *patrón* of the community. In addition to paying attention to American property law matters and water rights, he may also have promoted communal activity, encouraging or planning the construction of the fortification that became known as Fort Talpa. In addition to the monumental task of making all of the adobe bricks for this very large building, this construction project required the cutting, shaping and transportation of dozens of medium-sized to huge trees from the high elevation forested areas. Perhaps the settlers were able to float them down Turkey Creek or the Huerfano River to the Talpa site. However it was accomplished, it required a large, skilled workforce. The fact that the original building is in relatively fair condition after nearly 150 years is a testament to the knowledge and organizational ability of one or more significant community leaders.

In the 1880 census, Victor and Juliana "Montolla" were living in the Talpa area.⁹⁰ In 1880, Victor Montoya appropriated the Victor Montoya water right for a ditch that diverted water from Turkey Creek, upstream from Talpa. Appropriation of this water right is evidence that Victor began farming or ranching in 1880. In 1887, he applied for and received patent to 160 acres, which were the E ½ E ½ of Section 35, where the Montoya Ranch historic district is located.

⁸⁶ Ancestry.com, accessed Jul. 25, 2011

⁸⁷ Luis was robbed at the store by escaped Cañon City convicts on Sept. 19, 1899. "Daring Holdup at Talpa," *Denver Times*, Sept 19, 1899: p. 2, col. 4. See Jeannette Faris Thach's description of the store after the stock market crash of 1929 and her mother's debilitating illness. Oral Interview of Jeanette Thach 1979. Louise was unable to tend the store and the local residents were in desperate financial straits. People required goods from the store and took what they needed, some of them leaving IOUs for the Farises. Jeannette had to quit college and come home to tend the home, store, and her younger siblings.

⁸⁸ Isabel was appointed March 31, 1899, after the December 1898 death of her father. *Denver Times*, Mar. 31, 1899.

⁸⁹ See *Craig v. Leitensdorfer*, 123 U.S. 189, 193 (1881).

⁹⁰ The census records do not record addresses. The Montolla family is found within 1880 census pages described as Huerfano Cañon and they appear to be neighbors of the Quintana, Garcia and Harms families, all of which are known to be associated with the Talpa area. Montoya and Montolla are spelling variations of the same name. The wife of Victor Montoya in 1880 is listed as Juliana. The wife who signed the deed to the Farises in 1911 is named Julianita, a Spanish diminutive of Juliana. The ages of Victor and Juliana in 1880 are listed as 40 and 29, which would make them about 71 and 60 at the time of the land sale in 1911. Their children in 1880 are listed as Enofrio (age 12), Catalina (age 7) and Luis (age 1). *1880 Census, Montoya Family*. A woman named Fedelina Montoya married William Harmes in 1899, although it is not clear whether she was a child of Victor and Juliana or another nearby Montoya family.

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Agriculture

In 1870, a *Rocky Mountain News* column described the area as follows:

Be it known, then, that there is such a place as the Cañon of Huerfano; that in point of productiveness its soil cannot be surpassed... The settled portion, which embraces some fifteen to eighteen miles up the river from Badito, contains many fine ranches. The lower portion of the Cañon is mostly settled by Mexicans. The valley is narrow, and their ranches consequently rather small.⁹¹

Sheep ranching reportedly was common among the Hispano settlers in the area.⁹² Review of the 1880 census records typically shows the head of household as a "farmer" and frequently described younger men, including sons as young as eleven or twelve years old, as "shepherd."⁹³ If a young adult man was not a shepherd, he was often described as a "laborer." Eyewitness accounts from the 1860s and 1870s frequently mentioned that the "Mexicans" were sheep ranchers.⁹⁴ The increase of sheep ranching is documented in the 1878 proceedings of the Cattle Owners' Convention in the Counties of Pueblo and Huerfano: "Whereas, the owners of cattle grazed in the counties of Huerfano and Pueblo, regard with alarm and indignation, the increasing numbers of sheep which are being, and now are introduced into said counties."⁹⁵

The Colorado Business Directory⁹⁶ began publication in 1875 and identified the numbers of sheep and cattle owned in Colorado annually and listed both major cattle and wool growers and their locations. Sheep significantly outnumbered cattle in Huerfano County and the three principal sheep-raising counties for many years in Colorado were El Paso, Las Animas and Huerfano Counties. Conejos County in the San Luis Valley was also a significant source of wool.

Farmers and ranchers in the nineteenth-century primarily grew subsistence crops and likely took overage to Fort Garland to sell and distribute to larger regional markets. According to an 1870 agricultural summary, at Fort Garland, oats topped the list of products at 22,801 bushels. Wheat, corn, and barley combined totaled 17,747 bushels.⁹⁷

An example the local agricultural industry was described in an oral interview with Pablo Catedra Castro in 1979:

Sr. Castro: There were many people who lived along the river. Everywhere there were ranchitos. From here to the Rito de la Gallina (Turkey Creek) to Maes Creek and everywhere there were ranchitos....lots of Mexican people....many Mexicanos. Each and every one was dedicated to their little ranch. It was small, yes, but it was their own. And later there came a time when some of the Mexicanos sold their land. They went to work somewhere else. Like at the Steel Mill and all that. Now, there are a few who have a ranchito. Very few.

⁹¹ *Rocky Mountain News*, Feb. 5, 1870: 2 col. 1.

⁹² Hiram Vasquez documents that he ran sheep in partnership with Felix St. Vrain whose handwritten claim on the Vigil-St. Vrain grant dated July 20, 1869, described his tract of land as lying on the "Huerfano River at the Rock known as the 'Huerfano Butte': the lower end of said tract of land being near the crossing of said stream by the Fort Union Wagon Road and extending up said stream about three miles in length and on each side of the stream to the bluffs." Albright, p. 150. An observer wrote in the *Rocky Mountain News*, "There are several large herds of sheep in the cañon owned by different parties that have done extremely well, and several are turning their attention to that business deeming it on many accounts more profitable than stock raising." *Rocky Mountain News*. Denver, Colorado: February 5, 1870.

⁹³ U.S. Census, accessed at <http://www.usgwarchives.net/co/huerfano/census/>.

⁹⁴ "While all of the ranches near Talpa were owned by Mexicans except one owned by a Portuguese family by the name of Salizar I think." Owens 1975: 130; "At one time just in this valley from Badito up there were 15,000 to 20,000 head of breeding ewes," Oral Interview of Alton and Mary Tirey, undated.

⁹⁵ *Las Animas Leader*. West Las Animas, Bent County, Colorado, August 9, 1878: 4. Early reference was also made to "a great amount of bad feeling exists in Huerfano County, between the wool growers and cattle raisers." *Colorado Daily Chieftain*, Pueblo, Colorado, Aug. 29, 1873.

⁹⁶ "A profitable investment could be made here [Walsenburg] in erecting a woolen factory. The yearly shipments of wool from this and other points near here are as follows: Walsenburgh, 140,000 lbs; Cucharas Station, 100,000; Spanish Peaks, 50,000; Badito, 250,000; Gardiner, 125,000; St. Marys, 20,000; Butte Valley, 10,000." *Colorado Business Directory and Annual Register for 1875*. P. 219. Denver, Colorado: J. A. Blake. 1875.

⁹⁷ Mondragón-Valdéz 2000: sec. E, p. 15.

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Q: From where did these people come?

A: I believe they also came from New Mexico. They made their living by ranching. It was very different then from today. For example, back then anyone who had a ranchito could make a living from it. The land was productive. One could grow about anything. It rained much more, then. One could plant corn...whatever was planted it would grow. It wasn't like it is now. Now, if a crop is planted, it is soon lost. It dries up. Then, it would rain quite a bit. Dry farming, at that time, was very successful. And so was irrigated land, of course. Well, there was much more water with which to irrigate with. Much more. Much more. It is not that way now. I do not know why it is like it is now.⁹⁸

The Farises bought the Montoya Ranch property in 1911 from Victor Montoya. He had appropriated water in 1880, patented the quarter section (160 acres) in 1887, and referred to the land as his "ranch" in a 1908 purchase agreement. According to Faris family oral history, the Montoya family built the sheep pens. The Farises continued the established sheep ranching operation and also raised crops, including hay in the river meadows, an apple orchard in the area where the Colorado Department of Transportation recently built a new bridge on Highway 69, and a large garden to provide produce for the general store and for family use. The Farises expanded the sheep corrals, and sold both wool and lambs for meat.⁹⁹

Lebanese in Huerfano County, Colorado

Records are not available to accurately identify how many Lebanese people immigrated to Huerfano County, Colorado. It is known however, that the earliest immigrants from the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea to the United States were generally lumped together under the ethnicity of Syrian-Lebanese. As part of a larger emigration of Arabic-speaking Christians from the Ottoman-ruled areas of what is now Syria and Lebanon, the emigration itself had roots in political events that occurred in these historic regions, as well as in the broader international relations between the Ottomans, the British, the Russians, the Austrians, and the French.¹⁰⁰ The concepts of "Arab," "Arab American," "Syrian," and "Lebanese" were shaped in response to events of a global nature and a demand to establish an "ethnic identity" beyond their network of family, community and religion that had served them in their homelands.

To clarify why this occurred, as early as 1516, the Ottoman Empire, with no distinct borders, occupied what is today Lebanon and Syria. In 1860, many Christians were massacred in Lebanon and Damascus by the Druze religious community. This caused Christians occupying the region to flee to other countries, including the United States, between 1870 and 1899 for religious freedom and better economic opportunity.

Confusion regarding ethnic terminology of Arab-speaking people in the United States in the nineteenth century lends itself to the difficulty in historical research surrounding people of early American-Lebanese descent. For Christians, Muslims and Jews from the Middle East, one's religious affiliation determined one's identity. Up to the end of the nineteenth century, Orthodox Christians were often also "referred to solely as *Greeks*."¹⁰¹ In news articles they were identified as both Turks and Arabs. Many originally from the Ottoman Empire were given the classification "Syrian." This identity was imposed from without, but accepted by the immigrants as a way of identifying themselves in their new communities. "Americans understood nationalities not millets,"¹⁰² and the Arab-speaking immigrants learned to accommodate their hosts.¹⁰³ In the American West, Lebanese immigrants were often called Syrians, but the vast majority, being Christians from Mount Lebanon, referred to themselves as "Lebanese."

⁹⁸ Oral Interview of Pedro Catedra Castro 1979.

⁹⁹ Email to Vicky Bunsen Doucette from Edith Sheldon dated June 9, 2011; Email to Vicky Bunsen Doucette from Kay Beth Avery dated June 9, 2011.

¹⁰⁰ Scott, Kirk. "Multiple Identities: Lebanese Arab Christians in the American West." Darcy A. Zabel, ed., *Arabs in the Americas: Interdisciplinary Essays on the Arab Diaspora*. P. 61. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 2006.

¹⁰¹ Scott 2006: 62.

¹⁰² Millets were confessional communities in the Ottoman Empire pertaining to "personal law" under which communities were allowed to rule themselves under their own system. They became legally protected religious minority groups. The word *Millet* comes from the Arabic word *Millah* and literally means "nation". Scott 2006: 63.

¹⁰³ Scott 2006: 63.

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Between 1890 and 1920, an estimated 100,000 Syrian Greek Orthodox reportedly immigrated to the United States.¹⁰⁴ In 1908, the Department of Commerce and Labor reported that 41,044 Lebanese-Syrian people had entered the United States during the nine years from 1899 to 1907. Most settled in eastern urban cities, however, 1,344 gave one of the eight central western states as their destination.¹⁰⁵

The first to arrive in the States spoke Arabic but, depending on their commercial enterprises, picked up English, and as with other immigrants they desired to assimilate. Some Anglicized their names and enrolled their American-born children in school, insisting they speak English exclusively. In large Lebanese-Syrian communities, the Church typically maintained traditions of Lebanese Christians. But, as Lebanese families located in isolated regions separate from greater Lebanese-Syrian communities, they were on their own to assimilate and maintain their traditions. The tendency, natural to all immigrants, to group themselves in colonies, did not prevail among Lebanese-Syrians. The common pattern of "self-distribution" was no doubt, attributed to their business instinct.¹⁰⁶

Lebanese in America frequently established mercantile businesses, but first worked as peddlers, distributing products and trading dry goods. In the musical *Oklahoma*, the character Ali Hakim entered the popular imagination of the prairie west as the "Middle Eastern trader." It is recorded that Lebanese-Syrian peddlers were roaming over North Dakota in 1888.¹⁰⁷

No report of early Lebanese-Syrian immigrants would be complete without mention of the peddler, who went from door-to-door, town-to-town, selling laces, dry goods, threads and pins to housewives across the country. Both men and women peddled, leaving home for days or weeks at a time, carrying large leather pouches or sample cases from which they sold their wares, taking orders for delivery on the next trip. Often the peddler was the "traveling" half of a partnership, the other partner staying home to take care of the store, or mind the children.¹⁰⁸

In Colorado, condescending mention of Arab-speaking peddlers was reported in June 1884:

A band of Arabs is working the bead racket for the purpose of building an orphan asylum in the Holy Land, at Colorado Springs. When the wild and untamed Arab takes to erecting orphan asylums it is about time for the half-civilized Piute to begin eating with a knife and fork.¹⁰⁹

In May 1884, a similar band of peddlers ran into difficulty. The incident declared the headline, "Murdered by Mexicans: The Wandering Arabs That Were in This City Some Months Ago."

The readers of this paper remember the Arabs, as they called themselves, that visited this city a few months ago. They claimed to be from an orphan asylum in Bethlehem, and were selling trinkets ostensibly for the benefit of that institution. There were two young girls of them in this city, and more at Denver. They took in all the towns that were accessible in this state, and then went to New Mexico where they did quite a business." The Mexican dispatch announcing the news, "said they were Italians, dressed in the garb of Turks, but the description of their appearance was such that it leaves no doubt that they were the same party a part of whom were in this city."¹¹⁰

On May 30, 1884, a trinket seller was arrested in Pueblo:

Yesterday in the Police court of South Pueblo a Turk was arraigned on the charge of selling trinkets without a license. The poor fellow could not understand why he was up, but was made to know that money was wanted.

¹⁰⁴ Scott 2006: 63.

¹⁰⁵ Survey Associates 1911: 488.

¹⁰⁶ Survey Associates, Charity Organization Society of the City of New York. *The Survey*. Vol. 26. The University of California, 1911: 489.

¹⁰⁷ Survey Associates 1911: 486.

¹⁰⁸ *Genealogy Today*. Oct. 2011.

¹⁰⁹ *Rocky Mountain News*, Denver, Colorado. June 2, 1884. P. 6, c. 3.

¹¹⁰ *Rocky Mountain News*, Denver, Colorado. May 5, 1884. P. 1, c. 5.

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His fine was assessed at \$9, including costs, but having only \$7 in cash, the latter amount was accepted and the Arab was released.¹¹¹

As Lebanese families begin to establish themselves they developed from traveling peddlers to stationary and respected merchants. When Lebanese families settled in New Mexico, they were called *Los Arabes* (AH-ra-bes) by Hispanics.¹¹² Lebanese families set up general stores in Santa Fe, Pecos and Las Vegas. At least one family established a large sheep ranch.¹¹³

Across the border in Colorado, Lebanese families were also setting up general stores and herding sheep. Around 1889, brothers Saloom and George Saliba brought their families to Huerfano County to establish mercantile businesses to serve the coal-mining community.¹¹⁴ Catering to the rapidly growing coal mining population, the family opened a dry goods and grocery store in Walsenburg. Soon there was a need to serve the needs of coal camps northwest of Walsenburg. Saloom Saliba's daughter Louise married Asperidon Faris, also a Lebanese immigrant, and they purchased the Montoya Ranch property to open a second dry goods and grocery store at Talpa.

Louise's sisters opened a variety Store in Walsenburg. George Saliba and his wife had seven children; six were daughters and one son. Together, with his son, George operated a large sheep and cattle ranch in the area. In Trinidad, other Lebanese families set up two general stores, an auto repair and sales business, the Fox Theater and a motel. In Walsenburg, the George family opened another neighborhood grocery store. Since the turn of the century, Lebanese people have actively contributed to their respective communities in Huerfano County, Colorado.

Postal History of Talpa

The postal history of this area is confusing, due to name changes over the years.¹¹⁵ In 1878, William L. Harmes became the first post master for the area, at the Huerfano Cañon Post Office.¹¹⁶ In 1890 the name of the community changed to Talpa, and there may have been a move of the post office from Harmes' home to a store on the north side of the road on the mesa above Talpa.¹¹⁷ Harmes served as postmaster until his death in 1898. His daughter Isabel became postmaster in 1899 and served until Louise Faris was took over as postmaster.

Louise Saliba Faris (1888-1955) was born in Lebanon and immigrated with her family in 1895 to Walsenburg, Colorado.¹¹⁸ Fluent in Arabic, English, Spanish and some French, Louise worked in the thriving family store in Walsenburg. She met Lebanese immigrant Asperidon Faris (1885-1923) at a dance in Trinidad. Asperidon's parents stayed in Lebanon, but sent their children to the United States. Asperidon Faris established a mobile mercantile business in a wagon and toured the mining camps, selling supplies to the miners.

Louise and Asperidon were married in 1908 in Walsenburg. The town of Talpa was in need of a general store, due to the death of long-time storekeeper William Harmes in 1898, and the Saliba family helped the young couple get established in Talpa. They entered into a purchase contract with Victor Montoya in 1908, were operating a store and post office by 1910,

¹¹¹ *Rocky Mountain News*, Denver, Colorado. May 30, 1884. P. 2,c. 2.

¹¹² Smith, Toby. "Lebanese Pioneers: Arrows from Strong Bows." *New Mexico Magazine*, 1962: 20.

¹¹³ Smith 1962: 21.

¹¹⁴ Sheldon, Biography of Faris Family, July 2011; Email from Edith Sheldon to Vicky Bunsen Doucette, Oct. 12, 2011.

¹¹⁵ Bauer, Ozment & Willard, *Colorado Post Offices, 1859 – 1989*. Research on Huerfano County has been gathered, but not completely written yet. Therefore, this section on postal history relies in part on information provided in an email dated June 14, 2011, from Roger Rydberg, Secretary/Treasurer, Colorado Postal History Society. "Talpa was a small community with a store and a livery barn and several residences. It was the supply center for the ranchers in the immediate vicinity."

¹¹⁶ Email from Roger Rydberg, Colorado Postal History Society, to Vicky Bunsen Doucette, dated June 14, 2011. Mr. Rydberg researched the postmasters and locations in the Huerfano Cañon, Talpa and Farisita area using the archives held in the estate of William H. Bauer (deceased), one of the authors of *Colorado Post Offices 1859-1989*.

¹¹⁷ The town name Talpa was not used until 1890, although the name Huerfano Cañon continued to be used on maps as an alternative to Talpa for many years. Farisita was used after 1923. The name Fort Talpa is identified as an 1878 location by Glenn Scott 2002: 38. Owens 1975: 130.

¹¹⁸ Edith Thach Sheldon, *Bio of Louise Saliba Faris*. Unpublished, July 2011.

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and concluded the acquisition in 1911. They had six children, five of whom survived infancy, including Jeanette (1910-1992), John S. (1913-89), Raymond Joseph (1915-38), James Patrick (1913-91), and Joe Edward Alexander (1920-2004).

Verbal accounts as well as one 1912 photo indicate that the Montoya Ranch adobe was once a post office.¹¹⁹ Louise Saliba Faris served as postmaster until 1912. The post office then closed until 1923, when it was reopened as Farisita, a nickname given by neighbors to Louise and Asperidon Faris's daughter Jeanette.¹²⁰ The name is a Spanish diminutive form of the surname Faris. Louise served as postmaster until 1931, when Jeanette took over until the post office closed in 1934.

Talpa Today

Over time, the local population fell drastically. The buildings that held the dance hall, the school and other public places were abandoned and disappeared. By 1990 Farisita consisted of only a few homes along Colorado Highway 69. The post office was discontinued, likely because the store closed and no one was interested in assuming the duties of postmaster. Vestiges of a once-busy rural Hispano community faded away. Only the Montoya Ranch adobe and a handful of other buildings and structures remain on the dry landscape above the verdant Huerfano River Valley.

¹¹⁹ *Huerfano World*, April 9, 1998 (photo of Montoya Ranch adobe with the words "Talpa" and "post office" on signs.

¹²⁰ It has been frequently reported the Talpa Post office name was changed to Farisita to avoid potential conflicts with Talpa, New Mexico. However, the Farisita Post Office did not open until eleven years after closure of the Talpa Post Office.

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- "Murdered by Mexicans: The Wandering Arabs That Were in This City Some Months Ago", *Rocky Mountain News*, Denver, Colorado: June 2, 1884. P. 6, c. 3.
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Montoya Ranch

Name of Property

Huerfano County, Colorado

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Interview with Faris granddaughters Kay Beth Avery and Edith Sheldon by Vicky Bunsen Doucette, Apr. 16, 2011.

Montoya Ranch
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Interview of Mary Casias (Garcia family descendent) by Edith Thach Sheldon, Jul. 19, 2011.

Email from Roger Rydberg, Colorado Postal History Society, to Vicky Bunsen Doucette, dated Jun. 14, 2011.

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Purchase Agreement between Victor Montoya, seller, and Asperidon Faris and Louise Faris, purchasers, dated July 31, 1911, Book 81, page 99, Public Records of the Huerfano County Clerk and Recorder.

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Act of Jun. 21, 1860, 12 Stat. 71.

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Maps

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Myron Wood Collection, MSS 02. Series I, Subseries: Penitentes (Los Hermanos de Nuestro Padre Jesus Nazareno). Negatives 2775, 47617, 87610. Special Collections, Pikes Peak Library District, Colorado Springs, Colorado.

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1880 Census, Harmes Family, <http://files.usgwarchives.org/co/huerfano/census/1880/indx04.txt>
1880 Census, Montoya Family, <http://files.usgwarchives.org/co/huerfano/census/1880/indx06.txt>

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Edith Thach Sheldon, *Bio of Louise Saliba Faris*. Unpublished, Jul. 2011.

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<http://cdss.state.co.us/DNN/WaterRights/tabid/76/Default.aspx>.

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U.S. Patent, Certificate No. 2238, dated Feb 6, 1889; U.S. Patent, Certificate No. 6392, dated Jan. 3, 1891.
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Montoya Ranch
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1873 Tax Rolls. <http://files.usgwararchives.org/co/huerfano/taxlists/> (accessed Jul. 26, 2011).

Jose Blas Teodosio Garcia, Family Group Sheet. <http://www.kmitch.com/Huerfano/groupsheets/fgs74.html> (accessed Jul. 26, 2011).

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 # _____
- 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: History Colorado

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 15 acres
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

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

UTM References (NAD 27)
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>13</u>	<u>493766</u>	<u>4177301</u>	3	<u>13</u>	<u>493954</u>	<u>4177218</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>13</u>	<u>493806</u>	<u>4177260</u>	4	<u>13</u>	<u>493953</u>	<u>4176926</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

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

Township 26 South, Range 69 West of the 6th P.M., Section 35, All that part of the E1/2E1/2 lying south of State Highway 69 and north of the center line of the Huerfano River, except the following described tract: Commencing at a point located North 38 degrees West 50 feet from the NW corner of the Old Farisita, Colorado, from whence the E1/4 corner of said Section 35 bears North 60 degrees 55 minutes East 760 feet more or less and running thence North 38 degrees 47 minutes West 452 feet to a point, thence North 41 degrees 16 minutes West 566 feet to a point of intersection with the North-South center line of the E1/2 of Section 35, thence South along said center line 700 feet more or less to the Huerfano River, thence in a Southeasterly direction down and along said river to a point, thence North 38 degrees 21 minutes East 400 feet to the point of beginning, and except that portion conveyed in deeds recorded in Book 33, Page 182 and in Book 62, Page 398, according to the records of the clerk and recorder for Huerfano County, Colorado.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary of Victor Montoya's parcel was 160 acres, but 145 acres were sold or lost to foreclosure by twentieth century owners, leaving the fifteen acres. The district boundary for Montoya Ranch includes the buildings, sites, and structures historically associated with the property.

Montoya Ranch
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Vicky Bunsen Doucette and Dana EchoHawk (for property owner)
organization _____ date _____
street & number 303 Washington Ave telephone 303 882 7641
city or town Manitou Springs state Colorado zip code 80829
e-mail vbunsen@gmail.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

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: Montoya Ranch Historic District
City or Vicinity: Farisita vicinity
County: Huerfano State: Colorado

Photographer and Date Photographed:

Photos 3, 6, 13, 18: Vicky Bunsen Doucette (Apr. 16, 2011)
Photos 2, 14: Vicky Bunsen Doucette (May 4, 2011)
Photos 4, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 25, 27, 28: Vicky Bunsen Doucette (July 1, 2011)
Photos 5, 23: Neal R. Smith (March 5, 2010)
Photos 1, 7, 8, 22, 24, 26, 29, 30, 31: Heather Bailey (Oct. 14, 2010)

Description of Photographs and number:

CO_Huerfano County_Montoya Ranch Historic District_	0001	North & east façades
CO_Huerfano County_Montoya Ranch Historic District_	0002	North façade, west end (Room 4 storefront), lilac bush, apple tree
CO_Huerfano County_Montoya Ranch Historic District_	0003	South façade
CO_Huerfano County_Montoya Ranch Historic District_	0004	South façade, rock-lined structures in foreground
CO_Huerfano County_Montoya Ranch Historic District_	0005	East wall jacal add'n
CO_Huerfano County_Montoya Ranch Historic District_	0006	Exposed porch trusses, original red exterior finish

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CO_Huerfano County_Montoya Ranch Historic District_	0007	View facing south, overlooking Site B, sheep facility
CO_Huerfano County_Montoya Ranch Historic District_	0008	View facing north, State Highway 69 bridge over Turkey Creek under construction
CO_Huerfano County_Montoya Ranch Historic District_	0009	Shed, north & west façades
CO_Huerfano County_Montoya Ranch Historic District_	0010	Privy, north & west façades
CO_Huerfano County_Montoya Ranch Historic District_	0011	Rock-lined water well, with concrete surround
CO_Huerfano County_Montoya Ranch Historic District_	0012	Underground rock-lined structure, said to be an ice room, with concrete surround
CO_Huerfano County_Montoya Ranch Historic District_	0013	Cistern, SE of bldg, facing west. Building in the distance is not part of this ownership.
CO_Huerfano County_Montoya Ranch Historic District_	0014	Large apple tree at northwest corner of building
CO_Huerfano County_Montoya Ranch Historic District_	0015	View facing southeast from the Montoya Ranch bluff, overlooking the top of the sheep pens and the confluence of Turkey Creek (left) and Huerfano River (right)
CO_Huerfano County_Montoya Ranch Historic District_	0016	Structure adjacent to pens & corrals
CO_Huerfano County_Montoya Ranch Historic District_	0017	View facing west. Ruins of two-room cabin or shed in foreground, shepherd's cabin to the right, sheep pens to the left, Montoya Ranch bluff behind the structures.
CO_Huerfano County_Montoya Ranch Historic District_	0018	Sheep pens, looking south from first pen
CO_Huerfano County_Montoya Ranch Historic District_	0019	Room 3, facing south
CO_Huerfano County_Montoya Ranch Historic District_	0020	Room 3, archway, facing south
CO_Huerfano County_Montoya Ranch Historic District_	0021	Room 1, view to Room 2 through passageway
CO_Huerfano County_Montoya Ranch Historic District_	0022	Room 3, adzed log vigas & ceiling
CO_Huerfano County_Montoya Ranch Historic District_	0023	Room 4, facing north
CO_Huerfano County_Montoya Ranch Historic District_	0024	Attic, chimney
CO_Huerfano County_Montoya Ranch Historic District_	0025	Basement Room 1, facing south
CO_Huerfano County_Montoya Ranch Historic District_	0026	Basement Room 2, passageway to Basement Room 3
CO_Huerfano County_Montoya Ranch Historic District_	0027	Basement Room 1, hewn vigas and floor boards
CO_Huerfano County_Montoya Ranch Historic District_	0028	Basement Room 3, facing north, barred window in north wall, log embedded vertically in floor
CO_Huerfano County_Montoya Ranch Historic District_	0029	Basement Room 1
CO_Huerfano County_Montoya Ranch Historic District_	0030	Basement Room 3 window
CO_Huerfano County_Montoya Ranch Historic District_	0031	Basement Room 1, inscription on wall

Historic Photograph Log:

<u>Photo</u>	<u>Description</u>
H001	Ca. 1912, north façade Montoya Ranch. <i>Huerfano World</i> . Walsenberg, CO, April 9, 1998. Page 8. Courtesy Huerfano County Historical Society.
H002	James and Jeanette Faris ca. 1923, south façade Montoya Ranch. Courtesy Kay Beth Avery.
H003	John, Jeanette, James, Joe Faris ca. 1928, north façade Montoya Ranch.*
H004	Jeanette Faris Thach, ca.1931, north façade Montoya Ranch.*
H005	Ca. 1930, north façade Montoya Ranch and storefront.*
H006	Sheep ca. 1929-30, on current Highway 69 at Farisita, view facing southwest*

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H007 Gilbert Pino ca. 1927, Montoya Ranch sheep corrals.*
H008 Sketch of Farisita by Jeanette Faris Thach.*
H009 Montoya Ranch sheep corrals and cabin ruins ca. 1930*
H010 Sheep going north to pasture, upper Turkey Creek ca. 1941.*
H011 W. L. Harmes store and Talpa post office ca. 1890. Courtesy Denver Public Library, Western History and Genealogy, Louis Bernhardt Sporleder collection.

*Photos H003 through H009 Courtesy Edith Thach Sheldon, daughter of Jeanette Faris Thach.

Table Log

Table 1. Land Patents Issued in Talpa Area in the 1870s, T.26 S. R. 69 W.

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.

Montoya Ranch
Name of Property

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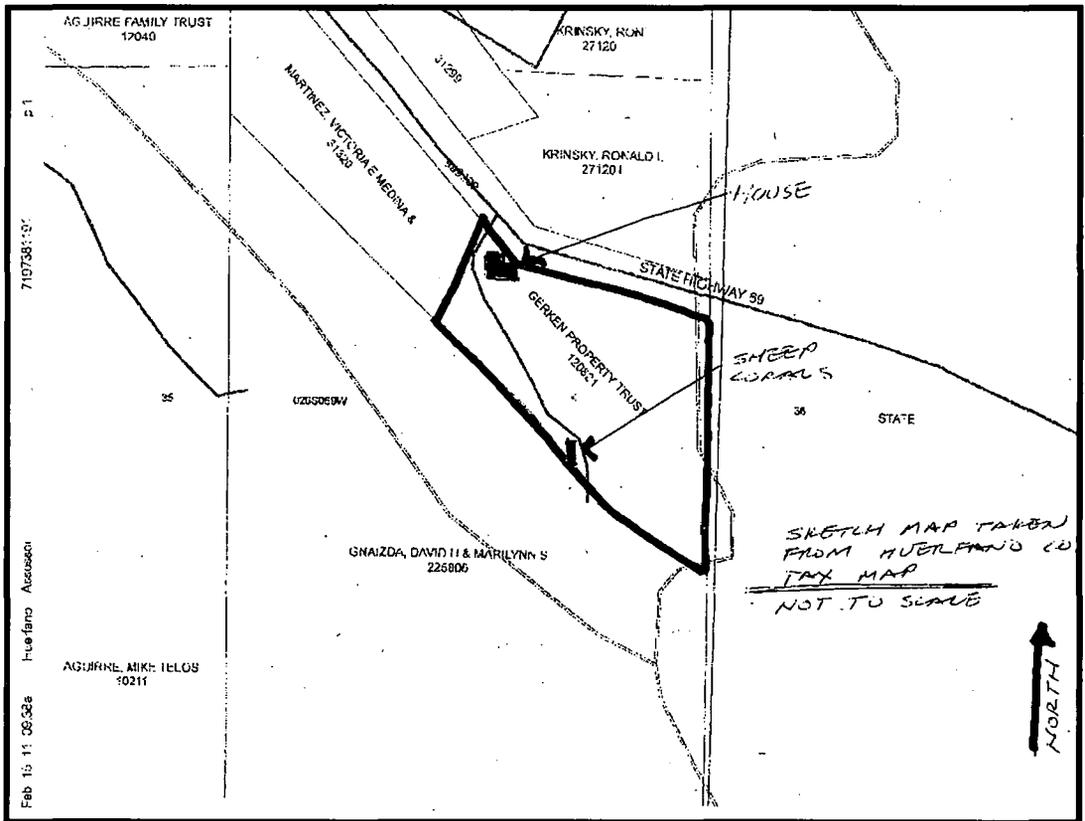
10. Geographical Data

UTM References

5 13 493835 4176985
Zone Easting Northing

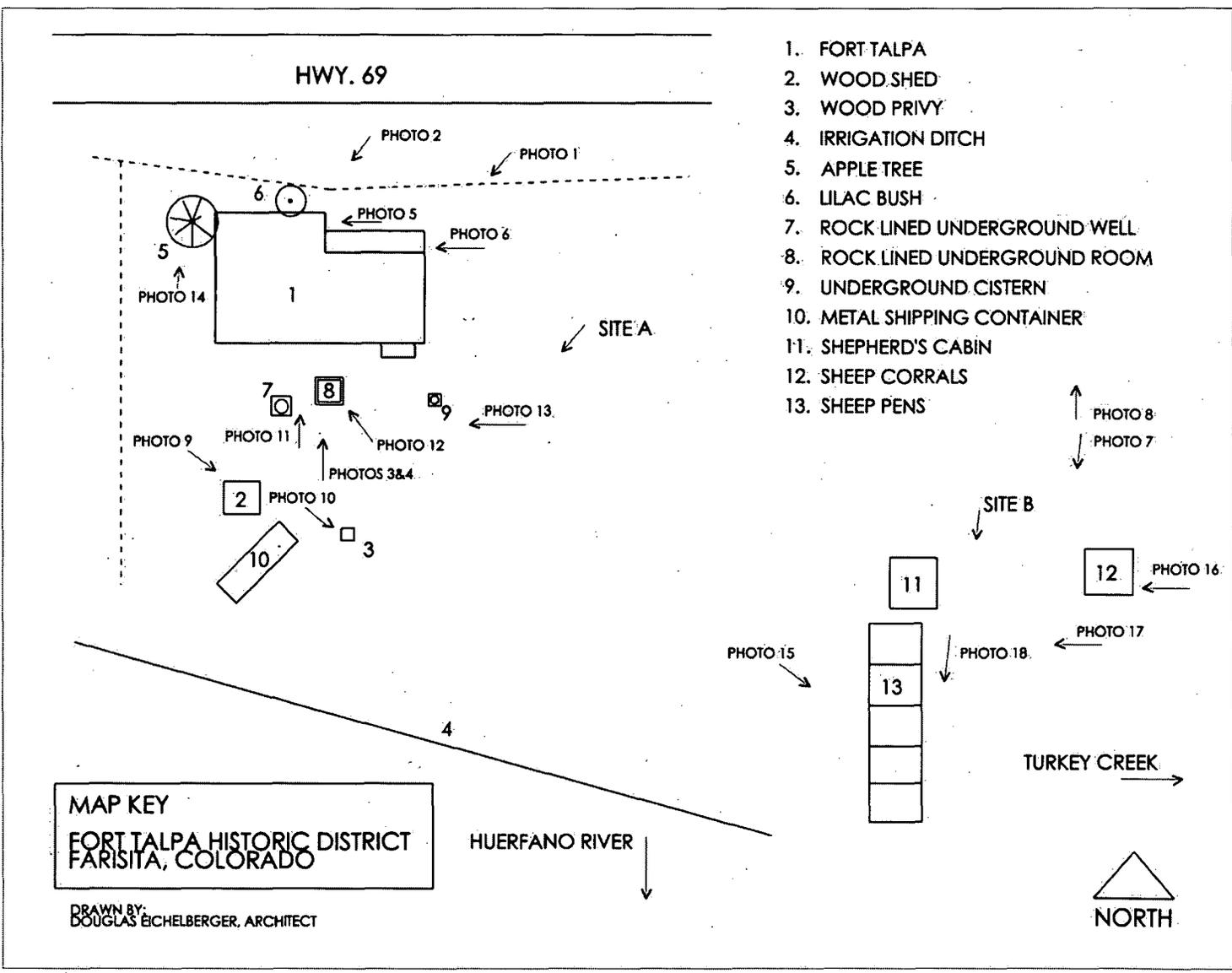
6 13 493669 4177203
Zone Easting Northing

SKETCH MAPS



Montoya Ranch
 Name of Property

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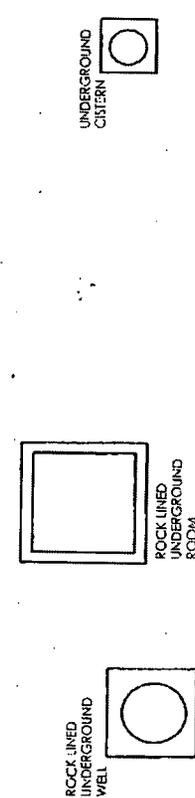
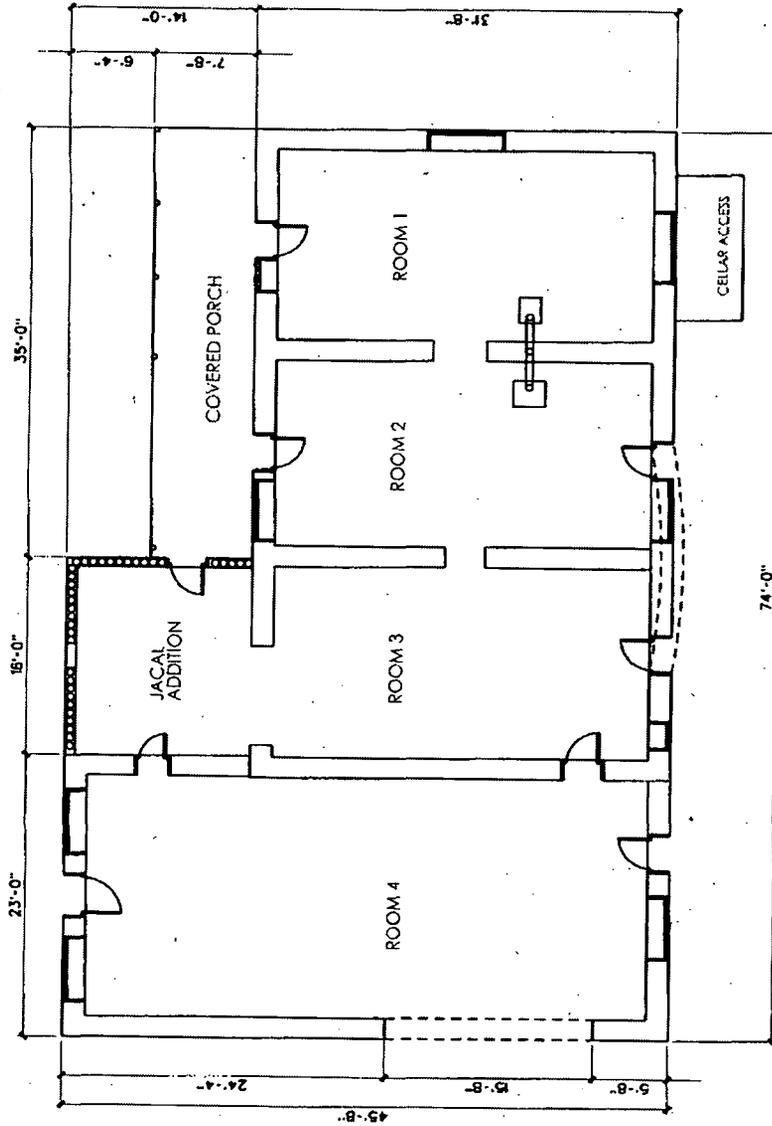


1. FORT TALPA
2. WOOD SHED
3. WOOD PRIVY
4. IRRIGATION DITCH
5. APPLE TREE
6. LILAC BUSH
7. ROCK LINED UNDERGROUND WELL
8. ROCK LINED UNDERGROUND ROOM
9. UNDERGROUND CISTERN
10. METAL SHIPPING CONTAINER
11. SHEPHERD'S CABIN
12. SHEEP CORRALS
13. SHEEP PENS

MAP KEY
 FORT TALPA HISTORIC DISTRICT
 FARISITA, COLORADO
 DRAWN BY:
 DOUGLAS EICHELBERGER, ARCHITECT

Montoya Ranch
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FLOOR PLAN
FORT TALPA
FARISTA, COLORADO
DRAWN BY:
DOUGLAS EICHELBERGER, ARCHITECT

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Historic Maps



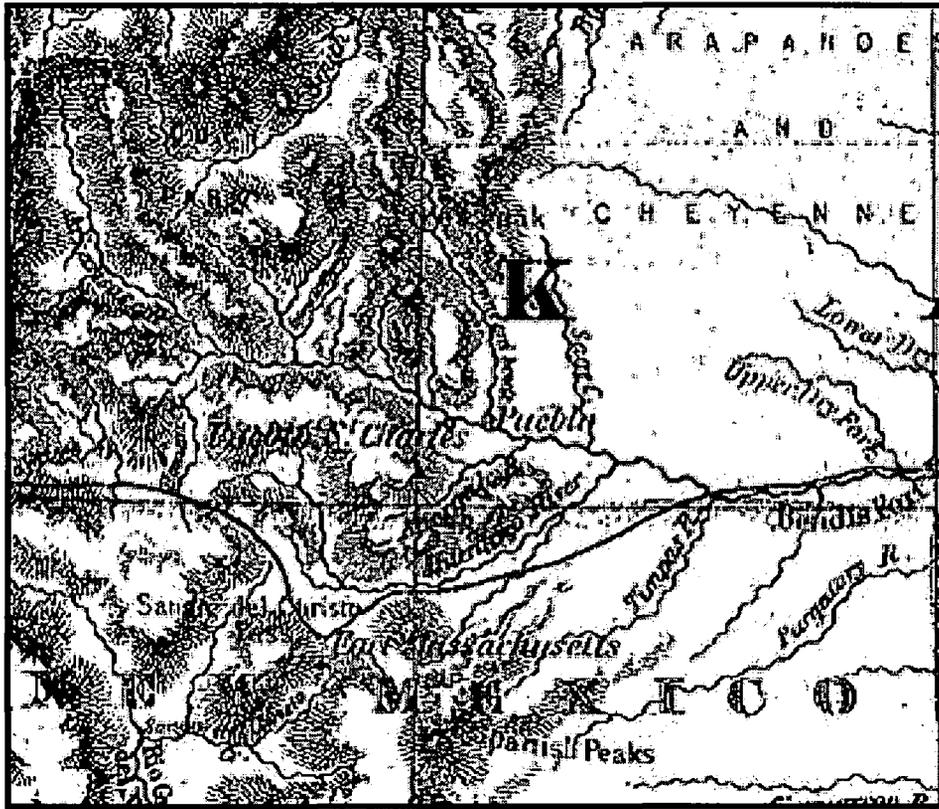
Montoya Ranch
San Luis Valley
Taos, New Mexico
Santa Fe, New Mexico

County Map of Utah, New Mexico And Arizona [and Colorado]. Chicago: Warner & Beers. 1871.

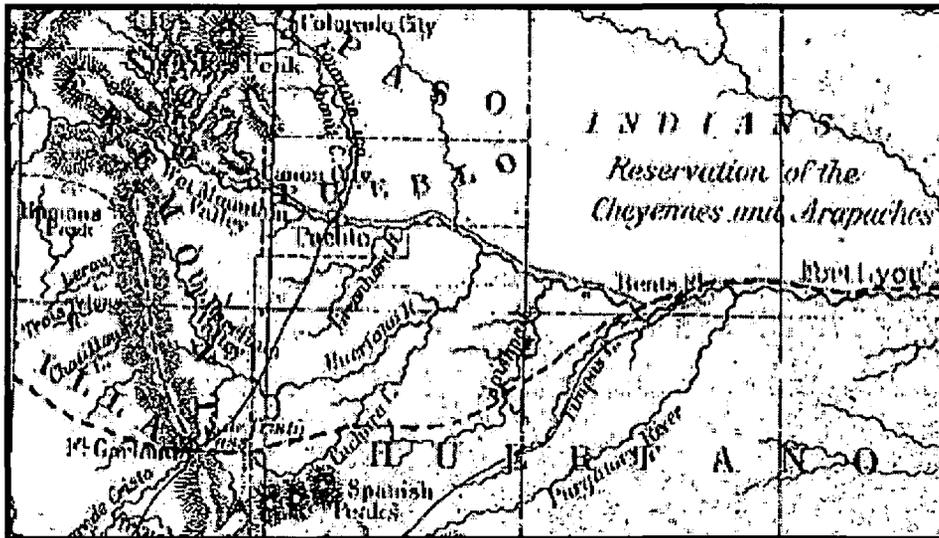
Hispano families left areas around Albuquerque, Santa Fe and Taos to move north to the San Luis Valley beginning in the 1850s and 1860s. The trip over La Veta Pass from Fort Garland to Badito is 45 miles on modern roads, fewer miles on the wagon road that crossed Sangre de Cristo Pass and followed Oak Creek. The upper Huerfano River Valley was the next logical place for Hispanos to settle.

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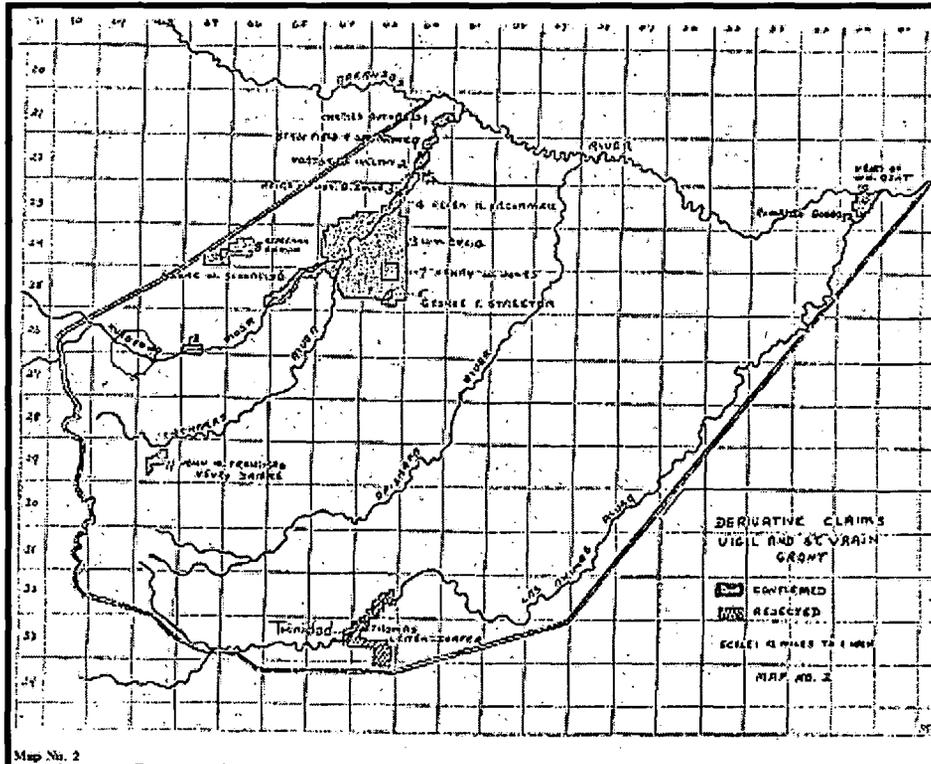
Nebraska and Kansas, J.H. Colton & Co., 1855, showing the Huerfano River in New Mexico and the nearby presence of the Arapahoe and Cheyenne tribes



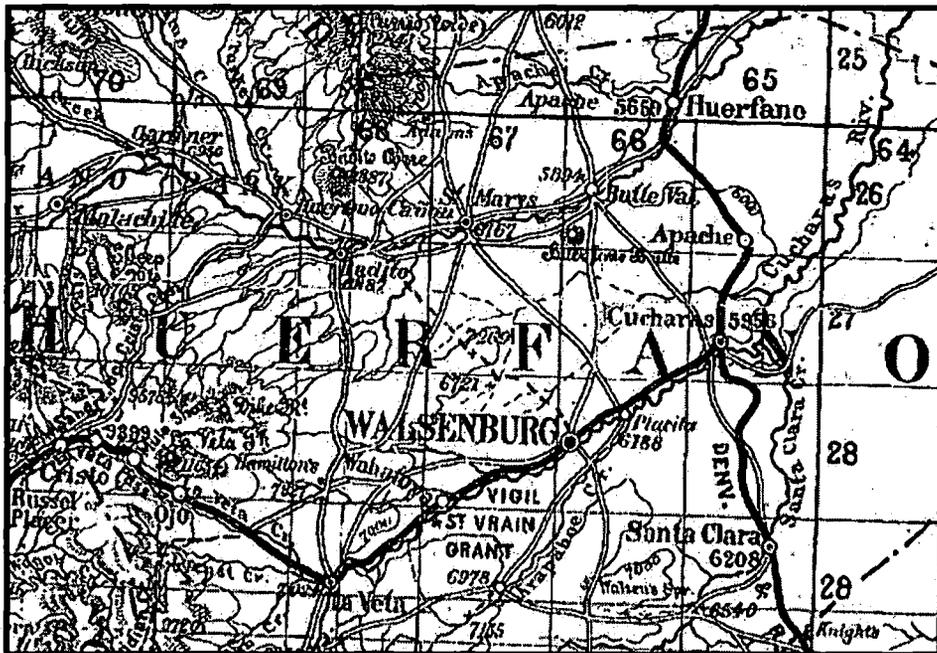
Nebraska, Kansas and Colorado, drawn by W.H. Gamble, 1861, calling out the Upper Huerfano Valley, which was becoming known as an excellent agricultural area

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Vigil-St. Vrain Land Grant, claims confirmed in 1874 (Huerfano Canon/Talpa area circled) Taylor, Morris F., "The Leitensdorfer Claim in the Vigil and St. Vrain Grant." *Spanish and Mexican Land Grants and the Law*, ed. Malcolm Ebright (University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, 1994).

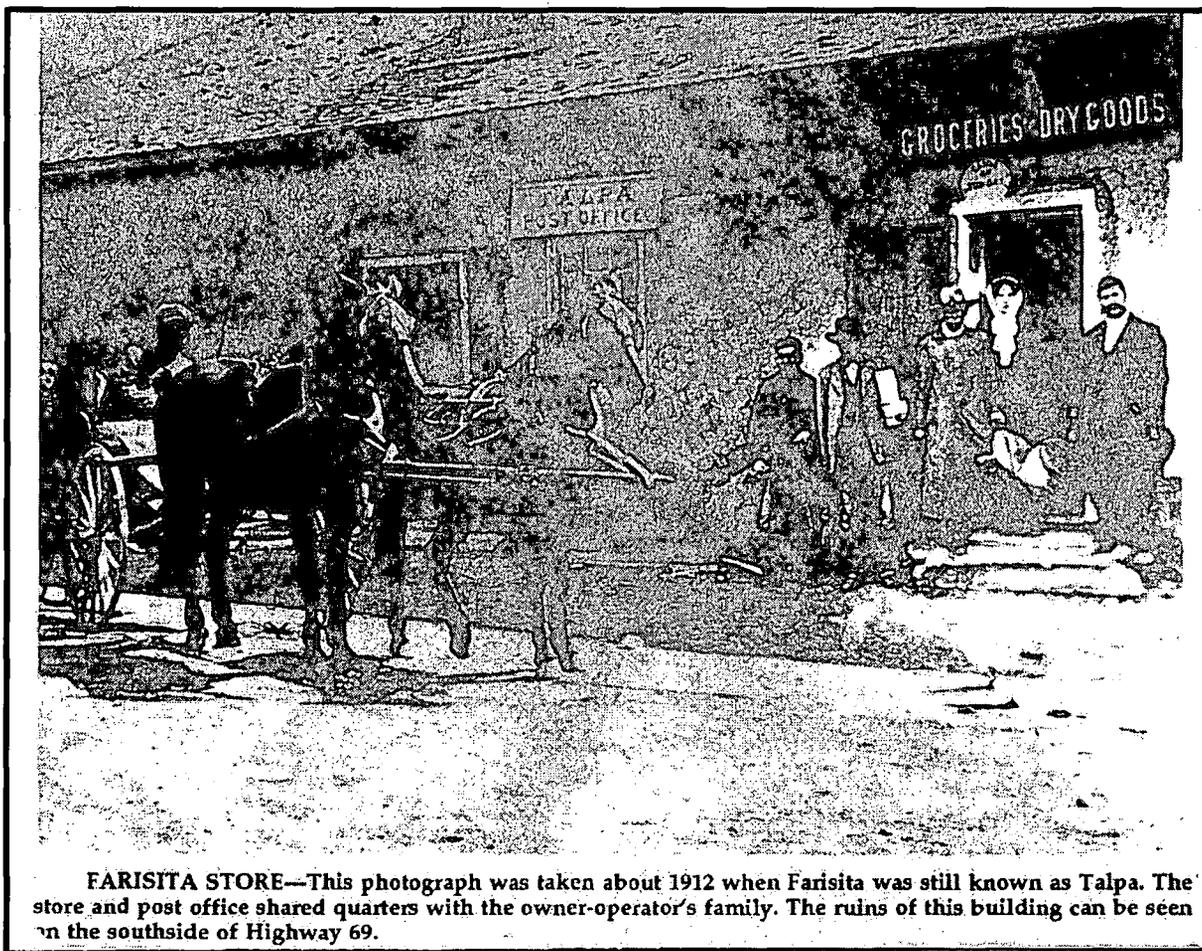


Colorado, 1885, designating the location of Huerfano Cañon, between Badito and Gardner. One of the main routes over Sangre de Cristo Pass can be seen passing by and/or through Huerfano Cañon

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Historic Photographs



FARISITA STORE—This photograph was taken about 1912 when Farisita was still known as Talpa. The store and post office shared quarters with the owner-operator's family. The ruins of this building can be seen on the southside of Highway 69.

H001. Ca. 1912, north façade Montoya Ranch

Montoya Ranch
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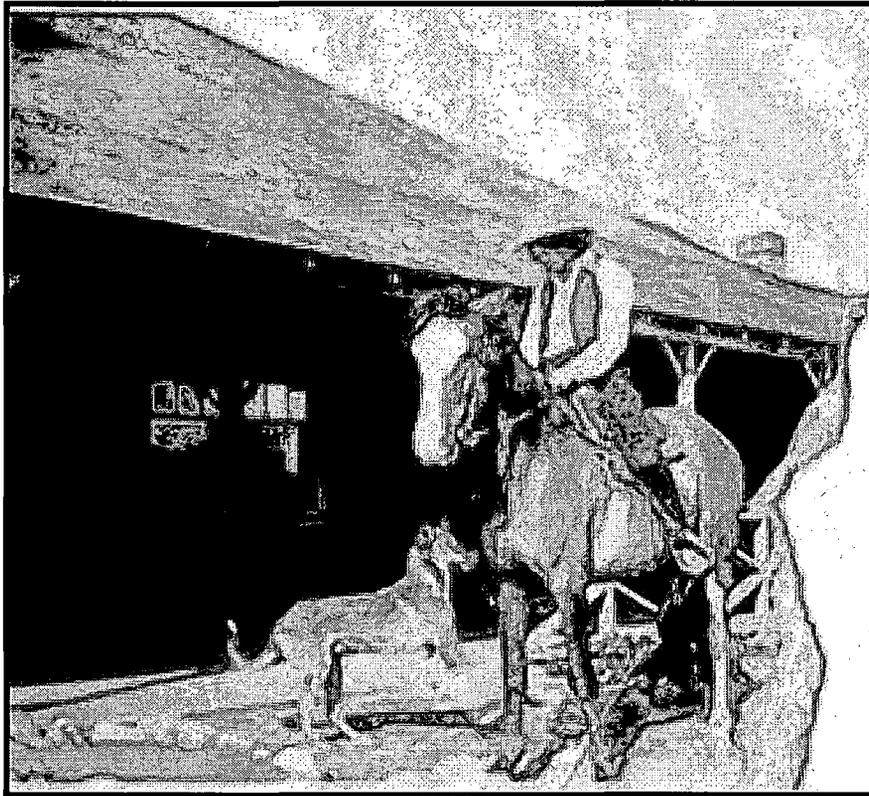
H002. James and Jeanette Faris ca. 1923, south façade Montoya Ranch



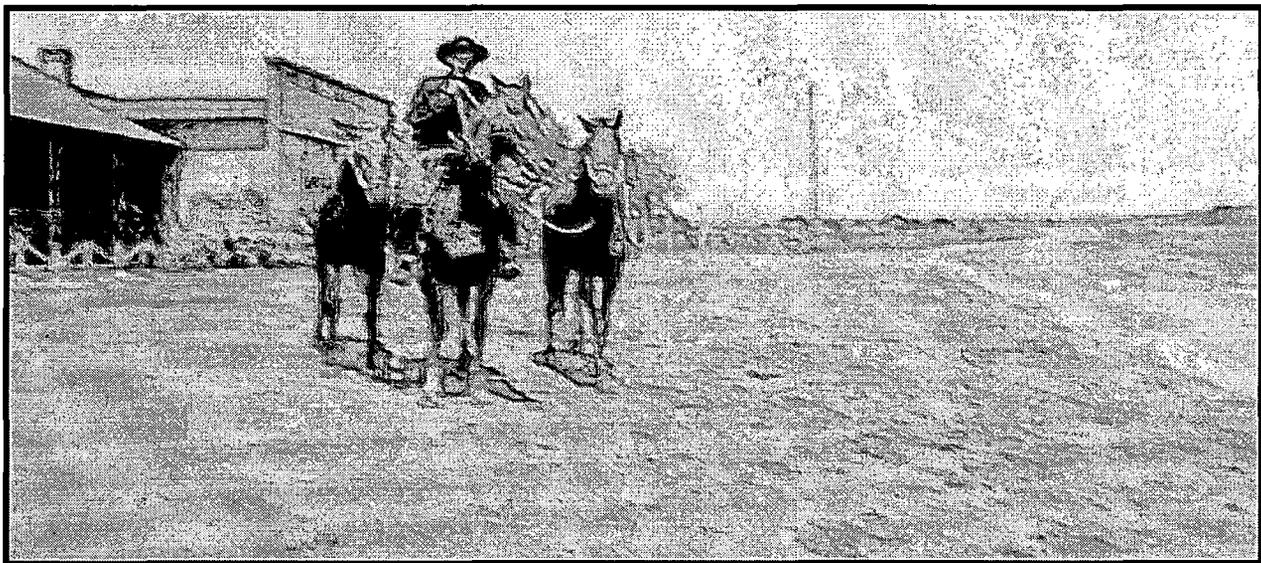
H003. John, Jeanette, James, Joe Faris ca. 1928, north façade Montoya Ranch.

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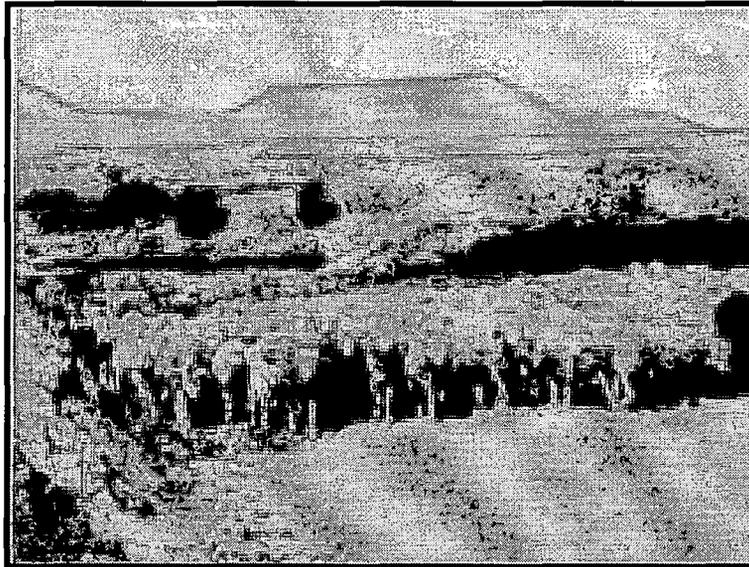
H004. Jeanette Faris Thach, ca.1931, north façade Montoya Ranch



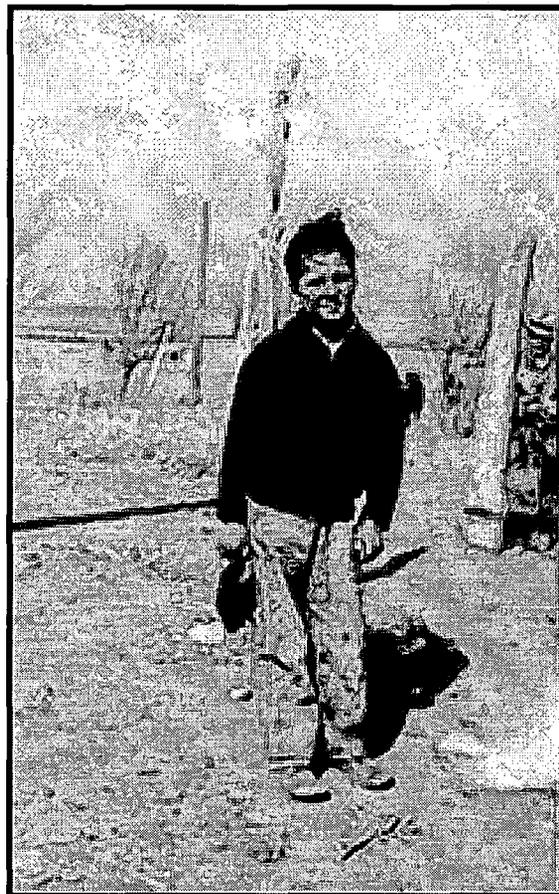
H005. ca. 1930, north façade Montoya Ranch and storefront

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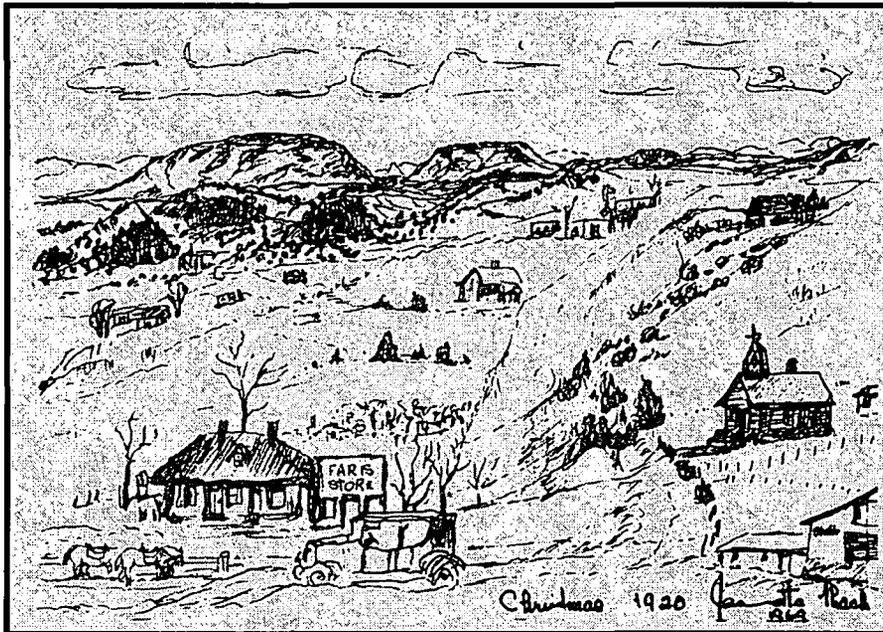
H006. Sheep ca. 1929-30, on current Highway 69 at Farisita, view facing southwest



H007. Gilbert Pino ca. 1927, Montoya Ranch sheep corrals

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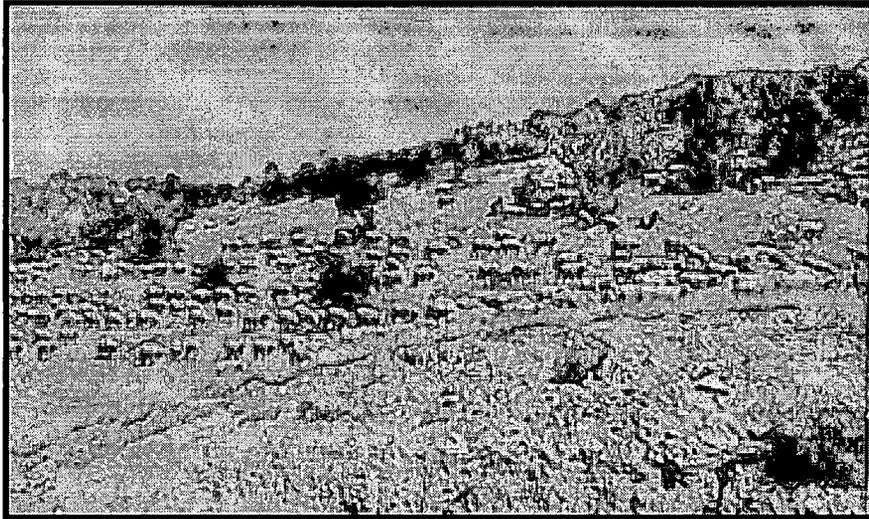
H008. 1920 sketch of Farrisita area by Jeannette Farris Thach.



H009. Montoya Ranch sheep corrals and cabin ruins ca. 1930

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H010. Sheep going north to pasture, upper Turkey Creek ca. 1941



H011. W. L. Harmes store and Talpa post office ca. 1890

Montoya Ranch
 Name of Property

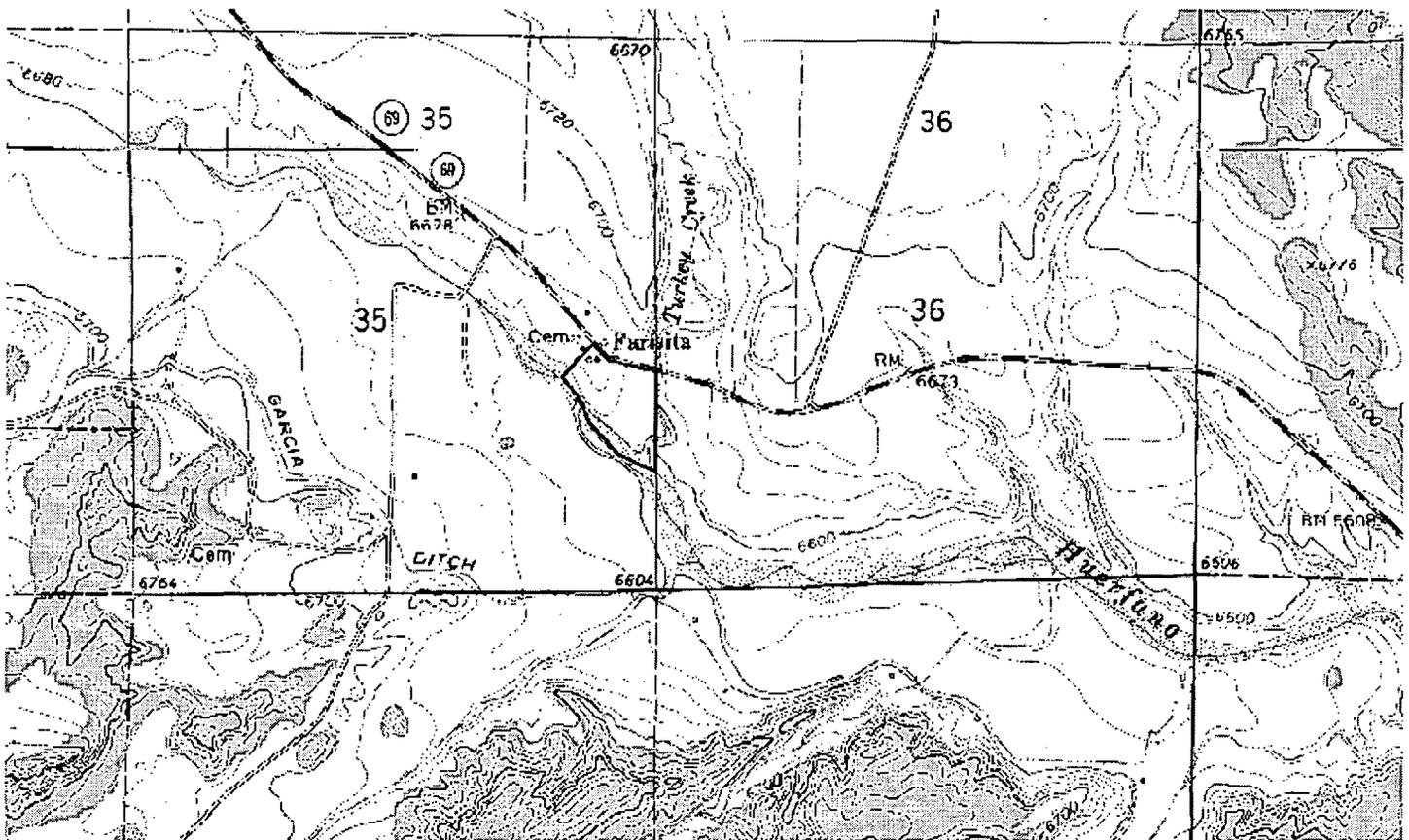
Huerfano County, Colorado
 County and State

Table

Patentee	Patent Date		Sec.
Garcia, Pedro Jose	7/30/1874	W 1/2 W 1/2	35
Garcia, Pedro Antonio	7/30/1874	SE 1/4 NW 1/4	35
		NE 1/4 SW 1/4	35
Baca, Jose Fabian	9/30/1874	W 1/2 SE 1/4	35
Sanduval, Manuel	11/3/1876	NE 1/4 SW 1/4	19
Quintana, Jose DeLaLuz	2/20 1877	NE 1/4 NW 1/4	35
		SE 1/4 SW 1/4	26
Quintana, Jose	2/20/1877	W 1/2 NE 1/4	35
Gallegos, Marcus	9/4/1879	SW 1/4 SW 1/4	27
		NW 1/4 NW 1/4	34
Apodaca, Pula	11/10/1879	E 1/2 SW 1/4	27
		E 1/2 NW 1/4	34

Table 1. Land Patents Issued in Talpa Area in the 1870s, T.26 S. R. 69 W.

USGS MAP



USGS Section. Farista Quadrangle, 7.5 Minute Series

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Property Owner:

name Gerken Property Trust (c/o James Gerken)
street & number 303-B Paseo del Pueblo Norte telephone 303 619 3891
city or town Taos state NM zip code 87571



