



History Colorado

March 16, 2026

Charlotte Graveline
Historian
National Park Service
Park History Program
Historic Preservation Services

Re: Preliminary Property Evaluation for Water Tank Road at Colorado National Monument.

Dear Charlotte,

Based on the preliminary review by the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, we have determined that the above named property does not appear to meet the criteria for the National Register of Historic Places or the State Register of Historic Properties.

The information provided on the nomination form will be sent on to our Information Management department for encoding into our database and storage with our site files. The form will be available to any researchers who request to see it, and so we do appreciate the time taken to document the resource. If we can be of further assistance regarding eligibility or the nomination process, please do not hesitate to contact me at 720.262.1042 or contact me by e-mail at damion.pechota@state.co.us.

We appreciate your interest in historic preservation and the National and State Register programs.

Sincerely,

Damion Pechota
Senior National and State Register Historian

Linear Component Form

This form should be completed for each linear resource or linear segment. Use this form in conjunction with the *Management Data Form*. Call OAHP staff (303-866-5216) prior to assigning a resource number.

I. Resource Identification1. **Resource Number:**2. **Temporary Resource Number:** 103. **Site Name:** Water Tank Road4. **Record of:** ☒ Entire resource ☐ Segment**II. Resource Description**5. **Resource Type:** ☒ Road ☐ Railroad ☐ Trail ☐ Ditch/Canal

Other (specify):

6. **Component Description:** The Water Tank Road is an unpaved gravel access road that runs about 0.17 miles from the west side of Rim Rock Drive to a 200,000-gallon underground water tank southeast of the Saddlehorn Utility Area in Colorado National Monument. The road begins at the trailhead for the Alcove Nature Trail opposite the Colorado National Monument Visitor Center and curves north and then west around a sandstone cliff formation. It then runs due southwest for about 600 ft and rises about 80 ft in elevation to a level area near the top of the cliff, about 350 ft southeast of the Utility Area. Vent pipes and access ways for the underground water tank are visible above the native brush and vegetation on the northeast side of the road. Past the water tank, the road transitions to the dirt Black Ridge Trail.

7. **Original use:** Road8. **Current use:** Road

9. **Modifications (describe and include dates):** The most recent iteration of the road probably dates to ca. 1980, when the current underground water tank was installed. Earlier access roads may have existed in the same approximate location (see below).

10. **Extent of Entire Resource:** 0.17 mile11. **Associated Artifacts:** N/A12. **Associated Features or Resources:** N/A

Linear Component Form

Resource Number:

Temporary Resource Number: 10

III. Research Information

13. **Architect/Engineer:** Unknown

Source(s) of Information: N/A

14. **Builder:** Unknown

Source(s) of Information: N/A

15. **Date of Construction / Date Range:** 1906–1907
or ca. 1940

Source(s) of Information: 2001 Historic Trails Survey Report; 2023
Historic Resource Study

16. Historical / Archival Data:

Kline, Laura, Holly Herbster, Gretchen Pineo, and Jillian Miller. *Colorado National Monument Historic Resource Study*. Submitted to National Park Service, Interior Regions 6, 7 & 8, Lakewood, CO, by PAL (The Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc.), Pawtucket, RI, 2023.

Whitacre, Christine. Colorado National Monument Historic Trails, Determinations of Eligibility Survey Report. Prepared for Colorado National Monument, Fruita, CO, September 2001.

17. **Cultural Affiliation and Justification:** N/A

IV. Management Recommendations

18. Eligibility of Entire Resource

☐ Eligible ☒ Not Eligible ☐ Need Data Is this an official determination? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Remarks / Justification: The Water Tank Road is not eligible for listing in the National Register because it is a utilitarian structure with unclear historical associations. A road in the same approximate location may have existed since 1906–1907, when the Fruita Pipeline was constructed through what later became Monument lands. The pipeline route followed part of the earlier Fruita Dugway, a nineteenth-century mule path near the west end of the Monument that had been built upon an earlier Ute trail. In the mid- to late 1930s, WPA or CCC workers may have altered or built an access road in the location of the Water Tank Road when they replaced the original wood pipeline with a cast-iron water main and installed a 100,000-gallon water tank at the site of the current tank. By 1947, the NPS had established the West Boundary Truck Trail, now called the Black Ridge Trail, which begins at the south end of the Water Tank Road and follows the Fruita Dugway along the Black Ridge and down the western slope above Fruita Canyon. However, a 2001 survey concluded that the historic alignment of the Black Ridge Trail did not include the Water Tank Road. The road has existed in its current form since ca. 1980, when the NPS replaced the earlier water tank with the current 200,000-gallon tank and improved the road for modern vehicular access.

19. **Evaluation of integrity of the segment of the entire linear resource being recorded** (Complete only if "Segment" under item 4 is checked and the entire resource is marked as Eligible under item 18)

☐ Supporting ☐ Non-supporting ☒ Not applicable

Remarks / Justification:

Linear Component Form

Resource Number:

Temporary Resource Number: 10

20. **Recorder(s):** Laura Kline and Jill Miller
The Public Archaeology Laboratory Inc. (PAL)

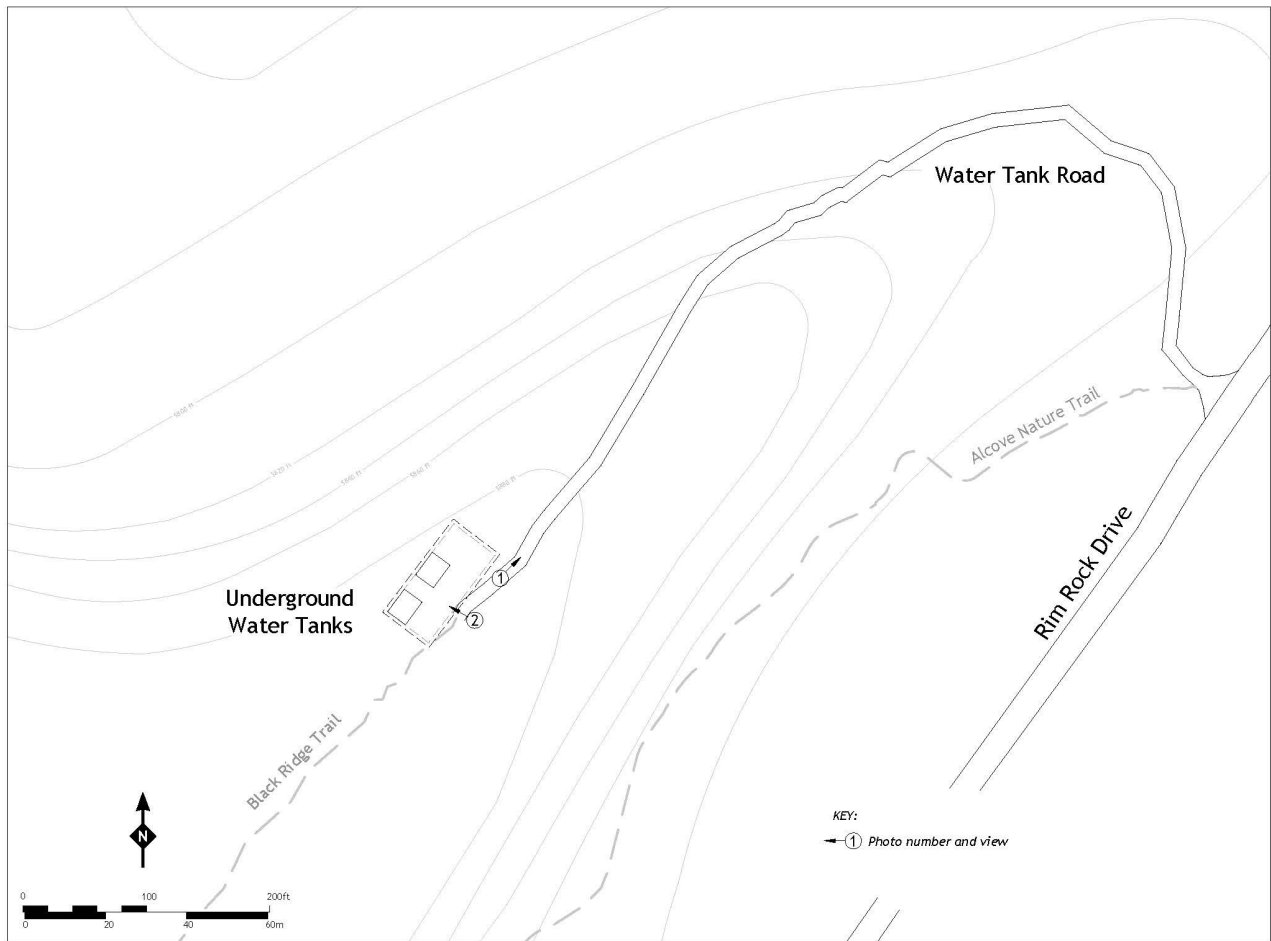
21. **Date:** 6/4/2024

Colorado Historical Society - Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation
1560 Broadway, Suite 400 Denver, CO 80202

303-866-3395

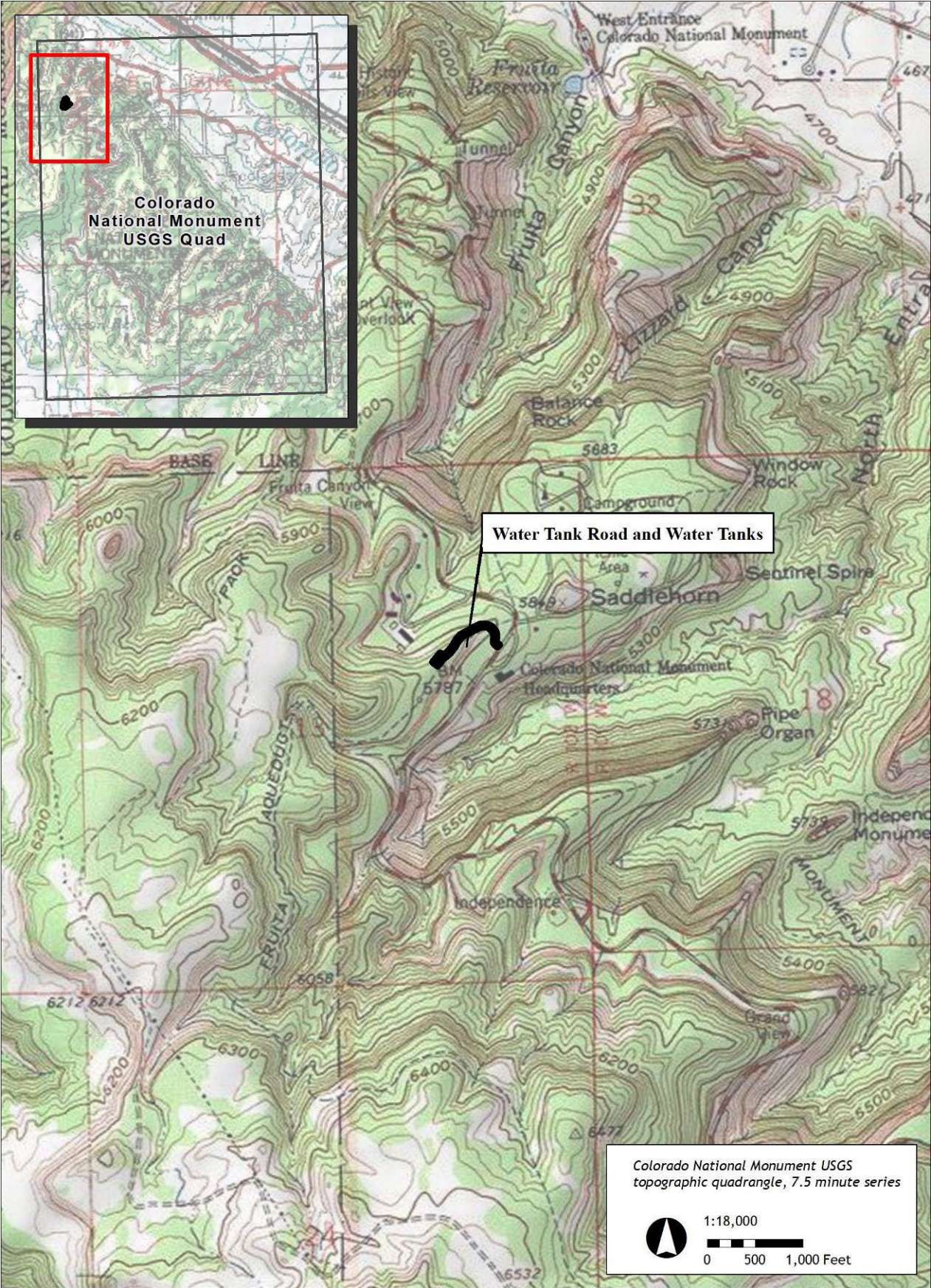
Resource Number:
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SKETCH MAP



Resource Number:
Temporary Resource Number: 10

USGS MAP



Resource Number:
Temporary Resource Number: 10

PHOTOGRAPHS



10_1. Water Tank Road, view northeast from southwest end of road with Saddlehorn at right.



10_2. Access ways and vent pipes for underground water tanks, view northwest from Water Tank Road.