McPhee, Colorado
A Company Town

The company town of McPhee, owned, built and operated by the New Mexico Lumber Company, lasted from 1924-48, serving as an important economic and cultural focus of the Dolores Valley. At its peak in 1927, it was Colorado’s largest lumber mill town, producing more than one half of the state’s lumber production. The town also featured the last logging railroad in southwest Colorado. Since its abandonment in 1948, the town has gradually disappeared as buildings were either demolished or moved. Today, little remains.

This project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) of the National Park Service’s National Architectural Engineering Record, Rocky Mountain Regional Office, in cooperation with the Salt Lake City Region, Bureau of Reclamation. Under the direction of Katherine Cole, Chief, Division of Cultural Resources. This project was completed during the summer of 1981 at the Historic American Buildings Survey Field Office, Cortez, Colorado, by John P. White, Project Supervisor (Associate Professor of Architecture, Texas Tech University), Steven M. Wiesenthal, Project Foreman (University of Maryland), Project Historians, Linda Dishman (University of California, Davis), Maureen L. Gerhold (Pennsylvania State University) and Lisa B. Mausolf (Wellesley College), Architects Debra J. Brown (Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University), David J. Insinga (Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University), and Student Architect Deborah Rehm Hurst (Washington University, St. Louis).

Site Plan, McPhee c.1940
Adapted from U.S. Forest Service Aerial Photograph, 1940
Buildings No Longer Extant, 1980

Location Map