



Rocky Mountain National Park

Historic Preservation in Rocky: Restoring the McGraw Ranch

McGraw Ranch Historic District is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the nation's official list of historically significant properties. Both the buildings themselves and the surrounding cultural landscape are listed as being significant to Colorado's history under two criteria: its association with the local Estes Park resort industry and its rustic architecture.

Following the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, park staff, volunteers, and contractors **restored** the exterior of the buildings to the most significant period in the ranch history, 1935 to 1955. The crews **rehabilitated** the interior of the buildings and the cultural landscape for use as a research facility.

The restoration work included:

- ♦ reroofing the buildings with green asphalt shingles, which echo the former green painted wood shingles, but are easier to maintain, more fire resistant, cheaper to install, and last longer. The exception is the barn, which has wood shingles and corrugated metal roofing, which match the original roof coverings.

- ♦ repairing and staining siding. Damaged siding was replaced in-kind to match the existing as closely as possible with board and batten, half-log siding, shingles, or log.

- ♦ installing new utilities including plumbing, electrical, phone lines, water system, and septic system. Common areas now comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

- ♦ stabilizing foundations on some of the buildings This required the use of jacks to lift the building, pouring a new concrete foundation, and setting the building back down. The crew also repointed the mortar on the rock veneers.

- ♦ restoring all windows in the complex; no windows were replaced. To repair the windows, the crew removed the window sash from all of the buildings. Then, they removed the glazing and lights, sanded, repaired, and repainted the sash, reglazed the lights (glass), and re-installed them in their original locations.

- ♦ repairing all doors and trim. If possible, the crews kept the original trim. New trim and doors match the original as closely as possible.

Furnishings are not original but attempt to replicate the historic style of the McGraw's furnishings. For the most part, appliances and fixtures, including sinks, tubs, toilets, and towel racks are new items. Some light fixtures are reproductions; some fixtures are recycled from the ranch and installed in new locations.

The McGraw Ranch project is one of many historic preservation projects in Rocky Mountain National Park. For more information on historic preservation, contact Bill Thompson, Facility Manager, at William_Thompson@nps.gov or (970) 586-1298.



Park staff cut logs to repair a building at McGraw Ranch. (NPS-RMNP photo)