Duncan Cabin, CO August 25 - 30, 2017

PROJECT PARTNER: Rio Grande National Forest

PROJECT SITE DESCRIPTION:

The town of Duncan was established in 1890 after the discovery of gold in Pole Creek, just south of current-day Crestone, CO. The town flourished in the early 1890s with several businesses and a post office. However, the site was also patented by the Baca family in 1854. Following a Supreme Court case in 1900, all prospectors and miners were forcibly evicted in 1900. As part of the eviction, all businesses—save for the Duncan Cabin—were dismantled.

An interesting article dated June 29th, 1900 in the Evening Democrat of Warren, PA describes some
of the events that led to the eviction of the miners:

“At War With Squatters,” Denver, June 29 – Fighting has begun between settlers and the new owners of Baca Grant, No. 2, in Saguache county, CO. A small miners’ settlement on Dead Man’s creek was blown up on Monday night. Three cabins were blown to pieces, the logs being reduced to splinters and rocks used in the foundations hurled hundreds of feet. Windows were broken and small buildings rocked in the neighboring town of Duncan, where the miners spent the night under arms. No traces of the perpetrators have been found. Judging from the latest reports, rioting may begin at any time, and unless the federal courts interfere bloodshed will follow.

Reminiscent of the former Duncan town-site, prosperous during the mining years of the late 1800s, the cabin stands a hallmark building of what is today a ghost town. HistoriCorps returned to this site to complete final rehabilitation work before the cabin could become an overnight rental for visitors. Read a modern article about the cabin here.

WHAT: Volunteers worked closely with HistoriCorps field staff to learn new skills in order to:

- Perform basic masonry on the cabin’s exterior
- Repair the cabin’s door and door frame
- Locate and seal holes in the attic to prevent rodents from entering the building
- Stabilize the cabin floor, depending on time

WHERE: The cabin is located here, 11.8 miles south of Crestone, CO.

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