

DOUBLE SPRINGS CAMP

©Shane M. Montgomery and Joshua S. Edwards

Cornerstone Environmental Consulting, LLC

December 2017

In 2016, Cornerstone archaeologists documented the remains of the Double Springs Camp, which is approximately 30 miles south of Flagstaff, Arizona, on the Coconino National Forest (Montgomery et al. 2016). The survey was completed as part of the Four Forest Restoration Initiative (4FRI), a landscape-level project designed to restore ecological resilience and natural fire behavior across 2.4 million acres of Forest Service lands. Following the abandonment of the Mormon Lake area (by a group of Mormons led by Lot Smith) in the late 1880s, the lands saw sporadic logging and ranching activities until the 1930s, when the Great Depression spurred the creation of federal programs aimed at creating recreational and forest management infrastructure across America's public lands. In 2016, Cornerstone recorded the remains of Double Springs Camp (F-6-A), a Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camp overlooking the western edge of the lake (Figure 1). The CCC was established by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to generate jobs for struggling Americans during the Great Depression and operated between 1933 and 1942 (Otis et al. 1986).

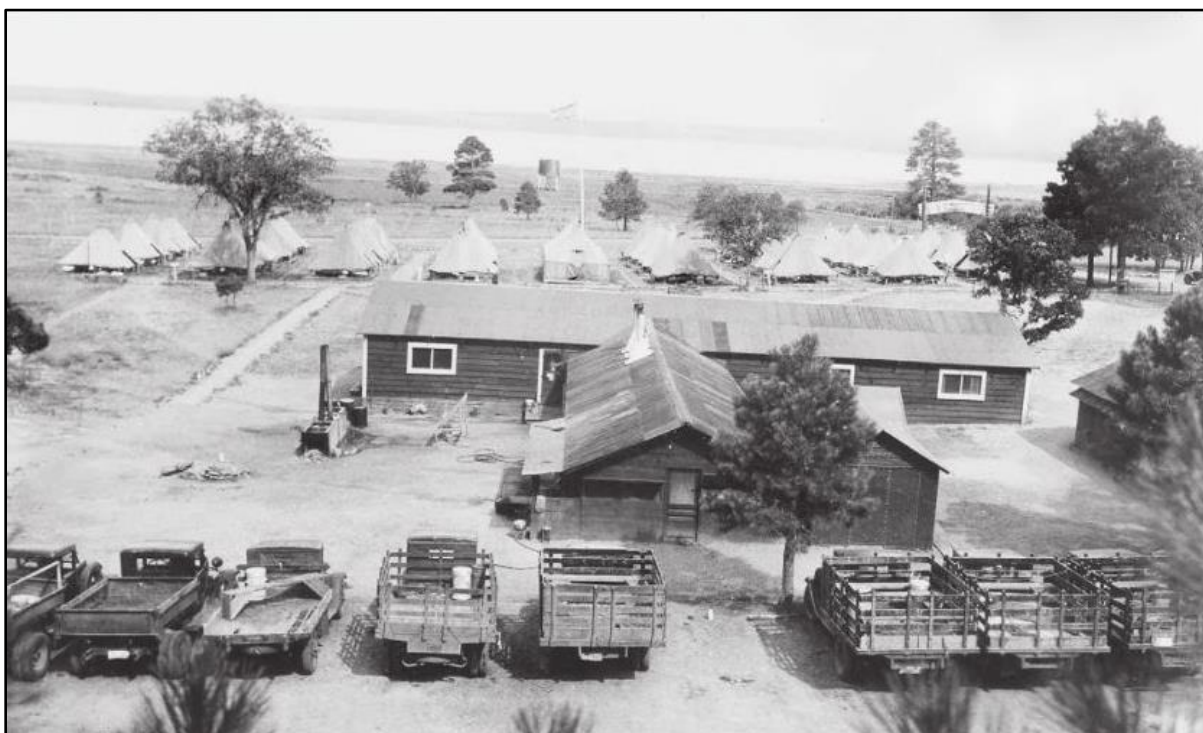


Figure 1. 1936 photograph of Double Springs Camp, with Mormon Lake in the background (courtesy of the Coconino National Forest).

Created through the Emergency Conservation Work Act (ECW), part of Roosevelt's larger New Deal, the program developed and expanded infrastructure within many of America's National Parks (Moore 2006). Workers constructed fire lookouts, fought wild fires, established trails and campgrounds, built roads, set

up telephone lines, and provided erosion and soil control. CCC projects emphasized a minimalistic design that strove to blend into the immediate surroundings. The ranger stations and visitor centers built during this period used locally sourced materials that were designed to complement the landscape. The CCC performed projects large and small at national parks and monuments across the country. Surviving structures at the Grand Canyon, Sunset Crater, Walnut Canyon, and Wupatki are wonderful local examples of the legacy of the CCC.

The Double Spring Camp was established in June of 1933 by Company 863, one of the first CCC groups active within the Coconino National Forest (Pilles 1994). Company 863 originally consisted of 184 enrollees, mostly from Texas and Arizona (Moore 2006; Figures 2 and 4-7). Enrollees were provided a flat salary of \$30 per month and were required to serve for a period of six months. Summer seasons were spent establishing and upkeeping facilities around Mormon Lake; during the winter months, the company transferred to lower elevation areas within the Verde Valley. Company 863 completed a diverse array of projects while at Double Springs Camp, such as the eradication of prairie dog and porcupine populations around Mormon Lake; the rodent burrows represented a risk to livestock, and could injure the legs of livestock unlucky enough to step into a hole (Audretsch and Hunt 2014; Figure 3). Double Springs Camp operated until 1936, when the facility was abandoned, and Company 863 transferred to Pivot Rock (Moore 2006). Double Springs briefly functioned as a side camp during the summer of 1940, before CCC activities finally ceased in 1941. The area experienced a revitalization during the 1950s and 1960s, hosting a youth camp and summer cottages that provided an escape from the heat of summer at lower elevations.



Figure 2. Forestry personnel of Double Springs Camp F-6-A, looking towards Mormon Lake; taken by F.L. Kirby, June 22, 1934 (courtesy of the National Archives).

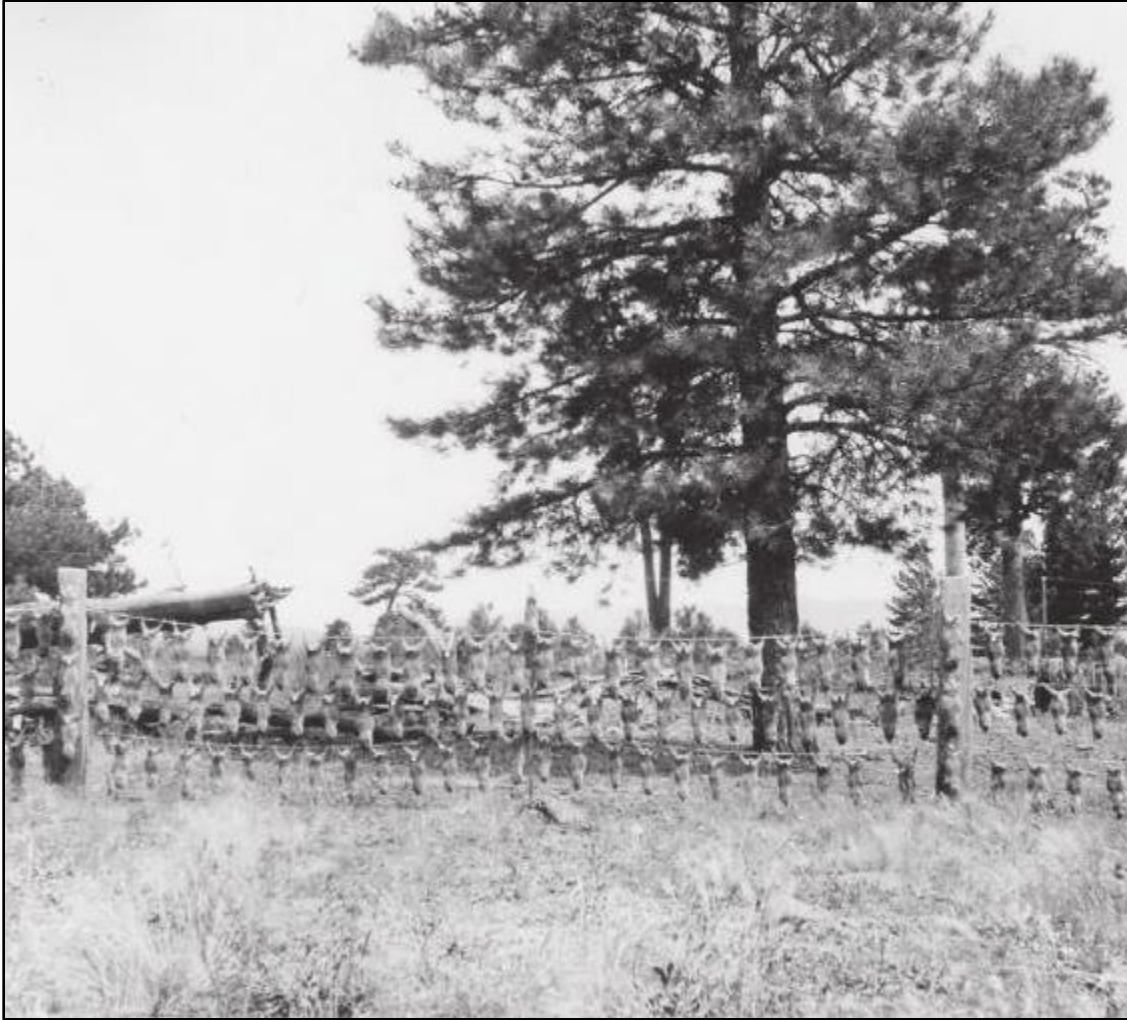


Figure 3. Prairie dogs eradicated by Company 863 from around Mormon Lake (courtesy of the Coconino National Forest).

Today, little remains of the original CCC buildings. Many of structures established at Double Springs Camp were largely comprised of canvas and removed from the area following the disbandment of the CCC. A few concentrations of basalt cobbles representing foundations, several depressions, and a water control device, provide the only indication of historical activity dating to the Great Depression. The site continues to function as an active campground for those wishing to explore the natural beauty of the Mormon Lake area.



Figure 4. Cleve Cox, Head Road Foreman, Double Springs Camp; taken by F.L. Kirby, June 22, 1934 (courtesy of the National Archives).



Figure 5. Expedition truck greasing rack, Double Springs Camp; taken by F.L. Kirby, June 22, 1934 (courtesy of the National Archives).



Figure 6. Benny the Bear, Camp Mascot, poses for the camera. Photo taken by J.D. Jones (courtesy of the Coconino National Forest).



Figure 7. Company 863 Tending the Leroux Forest Nursery at Camp Pivot Rock, 1941 (courtesy of the Coconino National Forest).

Disclosure Statement: The disclosure of the nature and location of archaeological resources located on federal lands is prohibited (36 CFR § 296.18). The unauthorized collection of artifacts and/or purposeful disturbance or destruction of archaeological features is forbidden by federal law. Please take only photographs and leave only footprints if visiting this historic property.

References

Audretsch, Robert W., and Sharon E. Hunt

2014 *The Civilian Conservation Corps in Arizona*. Arcadia Publishing, Arizona.

Montgomery, Shane M., Alison R. Hostad, and Joshua S. Edwards

2016 Cultural Resource Survey of the Mexican Spotted Owl (MSO) Mechanical Treatment Units of the Four Forest Restoration Initiative (4FRI), Flagstaff Ranger District, Coconino National Forest, Coconino County, Arizona. Cornerstone Environmental Report No. CEC 16-105a, Flagstaff, Arizona.

Moore, Robert J.

2006 *The Civilian Conservation Corps in Arizona's Rim Country: Working in the Woods*. University of Nevada Press, Reno.

Otis, Alison T., William D. Honey, Thomas C. Hogg, and Kimberly K. Lakin

1986 *The Forest Service and the Civilian Conservation Corps: 1933-42*. United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service. Washington, D.C.

Pilles, Peter J.

1994 Historical Overview of the Mormon Lake Area. Paper Prepared for the All-Forest Gathering, Mormon Lake Guard Station, September 14, 1994.