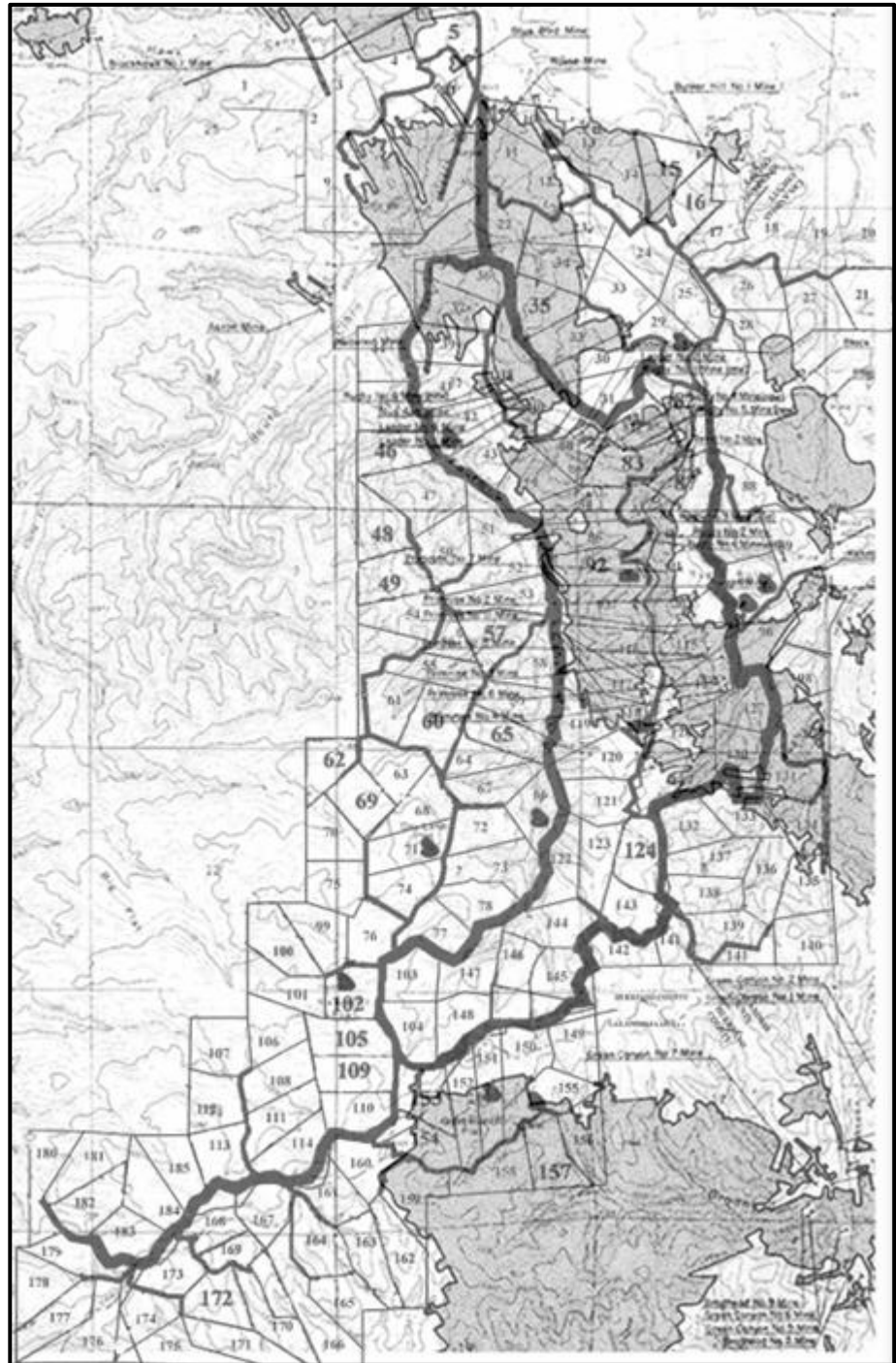


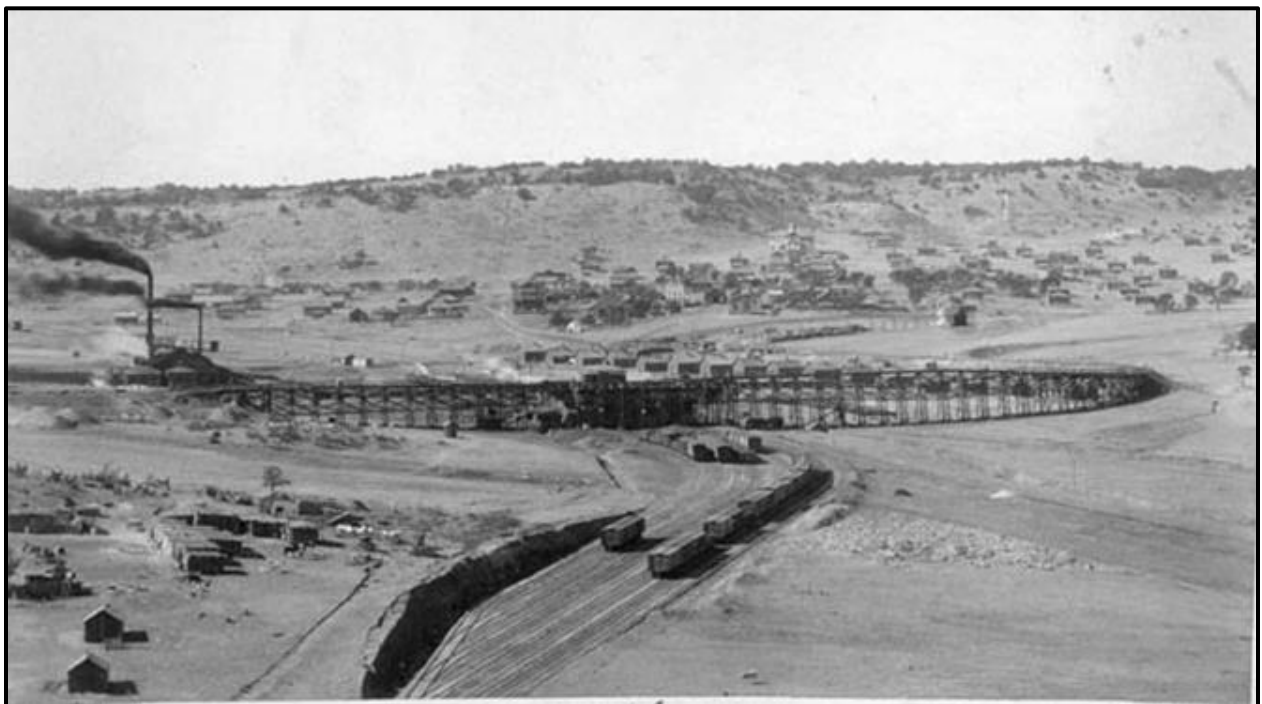
Mining History on Blackhawk Ranch by Susanne Bloomfield

Although the Utes were the original inhabitants of Blackhawk Ranch, more recent residents were associated with the mining industry, whose impact can be seen throughout the ranch, either in abandoned structures, mine tailings, or occasional sealed or imploded mine entrances. Throughout the ranch, deteriorating tree stumps attest to the amount of lumber necessary to fortify the many mine tunnels. The first and most obvious remnants of this once vibrant culture are the remaining foundations of the buildings near the entrance to the ranch that was once the town of Rouse, actually, New Rouse, controlled by the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company owned by J.D. Rockefeller and Jay Gould. It began operations in 1899 and closed in 1920 after producing 2,095,239 tons of coal.



Nearby settlements to the east included Pryor and Lester, as well as Rugby, located to the south in Las Animas County. The above map of the various mines located on Blackhawk

Ranch is overlaid with the lot numbers as well as the routes of Four-Line Canyon and Lower Mine/ Rugby Mines roads. Unfortunately, the names of the individual mines are illegible on this map, but the areas that they cover are shaded in grey. In *When Coal was King: Huerfano County's Mining History*, Nancy Christofferson has a general map of the mines operating in Huerfano County near the ranch: Pryor, Midway, Lester, Blue Blaze, Blackhawk, Spring Canyon, Bluebird, Rouse, Aaron, Redwood, Romera, Nun Ash, Leader, Rugby, Primrose, and Bunker Hill. When Land Properties Inc. developers originally subdivided Filing #3 of the 10 filings on Blackhawk Ranch, Pioneer Engineering evaluated the residual effects of the underground coal mining using historic maps and mine data to compile the "Report Concerning the Affects of Abandoned Underground Coal Mining in the Blackhawk Ranch Filing #3" in November 1996. In their report, Pioneer Engineering explained that "The mining method used at the mines was designed to maximize the amount of extraction and to deliberately induce caving or subsidence" shortly after the coal was mined. "The resulting subsidence is marked by a gentle rolling of the land surface. The thinner the coal seam, the less effect it would have on the surface." They concluded that "Mine subsidence probably occurred under the subdivision, even though there is very little visual evidence that it has taken place.



The time of the maximum influence or significant disturbance was probably from 48-98 years ago based on the recorded dates of operation of the mines. There may be some small residual effects present in the area, and these can be compensated by a low-cost design of strengthened foundations, non-rigid home construction, and orientation of construction along the directions of the potential minor stresses, or avoiding the undermined regions altogether. The area of most concern would be around the fringes of the historic mining." Three major mines operated in this one particular section of Blackhawk Ranch. Black Diamond Mines, below

parcels 26 and 27, operated from 1901-1922 and produced 438,700 tons of coal in seams 3' thick. The deepest shafts were 200'. The New Rouse mine (pictured above) beneath parcels 23 and 29-41 had 4'7" seams and was 2,000 feet at the deepest part. It produced more than 3,400,000 tons of coal between 1905-1920 and 1936- 1948.



The Rugby mines produced over 1,275,000 tons of coal with seams of 3'- 4' at a depth of about 250' during the years of 1898-1924, 1935-1936, and 1945-1954. Although Parcel 34 is the only lot included in this report for Filing #3, nearby lots in Las Animas county would also have seen mining activity from the Rugby mine.

Many resources are available for residents if they wish to learn more about the mining activity on Blackhawk Ranch. Another historical references specific to coal mining here is *Coal People: Life in Southern Colorado's Company Towns, 1890-1930* by Rick J. Clyne. In addition, several historical centers have a wealth of information as well as archives available to the public: Huerfano Heritage Center and the Apishapa Valley Heritage Center in Aguilar. Other

sources of information can be obtained from the Huerfano County Clerk and the Land Use Office in Walsenburg and the Las Animas County Clerk in Trinidad.

For those who are interested in learning more about the history of Rouse as well as Colorado Fuel & Iron, its miners, its mines, and the Pueblo Steel Mill, a visit to the Steelworks Museum in Pueblo would be well worth your time. The museum is housed in the 1901 Medical Dispensary of CF&I and located in south Pueblo just west of I-25. CF&I, founded in 1872 by General William Jackson Palmer to manufacture steel rails for his Denver and Rio Grande Railway, was later owned by John D. Rockefeller. CF&I was once the largest private landowner and largest employer in Colorado, and the company owned mines and mining towns from Massachusetts to California. Rouse was one of Rockefeller's company towns. Immigrants from all over the world flooded into Colorado to work in mines like those on Blackhawk Ranch as well as in the Pueblo steel mill. At one time, 42 different languages were spoken by these workers. The museum provides "A Story of Steel" and an historical timeline of what life was like in a company town for the workers and their families through interactive displays. It describes the rich cultural heritage of our area. One of the rooms is a restored medical dispensary that shows what early industrial medicine was like and includes over 200 original artifacts. Outside the museum, you can also visit the restored 1882 CF&I Mine Rescue Car #1, the oldest such car in the United States. Tour guides are available, or you can browse on your own. The Steelworks

Archives include over 100,000 photographs, 30,000 maps and drawings, more than 150 films, hundreds of ledgers, and internal camp publications about mines and mining life. It is the largest publicly available corporate archives in America. The original steel mill, once over 500 acres, is across the railroad tracks to the west of the museum. The Steelworks Museum only has the map for the Rouse mine itself.