

# R.C. McConnell History

## History of R. C. McConnell

### First Redfeather Lakes Area Forest Ranger

By Lee F. McConnell, Grandson

Robert Carter McConnell was born near Centerview, Missouri in 1877 and came to Gunnison, Colorado to work on his uncle's ranch at the age of sixteen.

At age 23 he married Jessie Young and also worked at his father-in-law's ranch until 1909, when he applied for a ranger position in the Medicine Bow National Forest in the new district of Manhattan, upper Poudre and Red Feather areas. His application was approved and he moved his family of three to Manhattan .

He built the ranger station with the aid of two Manhattan miners, George and Matt Ragan, in the summer of 1909.



Manhattan Ranger Station 1914  
Built by Ranger R.C. McConnell 1909  
owned by R.C. Jessie and Frank McConnell  
and Jessie's father James Young.

Manhattan Ranger Station, 1914

He had many challenges, mainly enforcing the new range regulations in grazing permits for the ranchers' livestock. He spent many years of hard labor surveying and building trails with his crews as another responsibility.



*McConnell Supervising trail construction*

R. C. McConnell is on the left supervising trail construction near the Grey Mountain Trail, later renamed Greyrock.

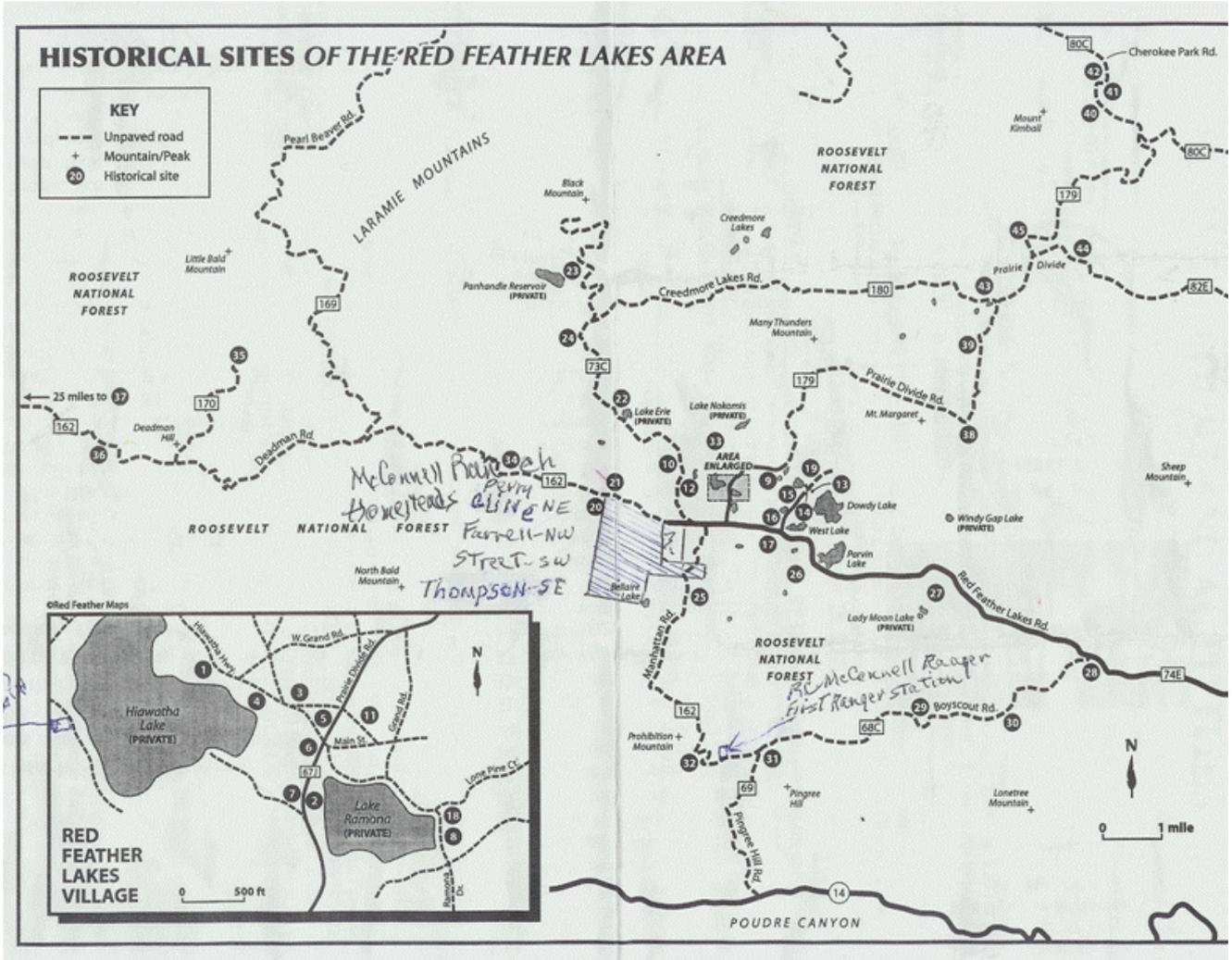
In Stan Case's book "The Poudre A Photo History," there are more pictures of the ranger station and RC's crew building the trails.

The ranger station was one mile west of Pingree Hill Road (Goodell Corner) – where the school house was and where my father Frank McConnell attended Elkhorn grade school.

In 1919, RC bought up five homesteads in Redfeather: The Thompson, Cline, Farrell, Perry and Street Places. R. RC resigned his forest ranger position at the end of 1919. He sold his ranch to Sam Hanson in 1948 and continued at the family farm in LaPorte until his death in 1953.

I read a letter from his supervisor, Sherman Wheeler, that RC would be a hard man to replace because of his ability to get along so well with ranchers and the general public, work ethic and common sense.

There is a mountain and trail system named in his honor in Poudre Canyon.



*Historical Sites of Red Feather Map*