

COLORADO CULTURAL RESOURCE SURVEY

Architectural Inventory Form

Official Eligibility Determination  
(OAHF use only)

OAHF1403  
Rev. 9/98

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Initials \_\_\_\_\_

- Determined Eligible – National Register
- Determined Not Eligible – National Register
- Determined Eligible – State Register
- Determine Not Eligible – State Register
- Need Data
- Contributes to eligible National Register District
- Noncontributing to eligible National Register District

I. IDENTIFICATION

- 1. Resource number: **5SM.1747/THAS.99** Parcel number(s): **456536416004**
- 2. Temporary resource number: **N/A**
- 3. County: **San Miguel**
- 4. City: **Telluride**
- 5. Historic Building Name: **Mountain States Telephone and Telegraph Building**
- 6. Current Building Name: **Randys Telluride Legacy LLC Building**
- 7. Building Address: **120 N. Fir Street**
- 8. Owner Name and Address: **Randy's Telluride Legacy LLC  
C O 3921 Raleigh  
Denver, CO 80212**

<b>456536416004</b>



<b>THLD RATING:</b>	<b>Primary - Supporting to District</b> <b>Garage – Non-Contributing without Qualifications</b> <b>Shed – Non-Designated – New Construction</b>
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## II. GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

9. P.M.: **New Mexico** Township: **43N** Range: **9W**  
**SE ¼ of SW ¼ of SW ¼ of SE ¼ of Section 036**
10. UTM reference (Datum: NAD27)  
 Zone: **13** **252994 mE** **4202443 mN**
11. USGS quad name: **Telluride, Colorado**  
 Year: **1955** Map scale: **7.5'**
12. Lot(s): **Lot 2, Block 5**  
 Addition: **Telluride Original Townsite** Year of addition: **1883**
13. Boundary description and justification:  
**This legally defined parcel encompasses, but does not exceed, the land historically associated with this property.**  
 Metes and bounds?: Describe:

## III. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

14. Building plan (footprint, shape): **Rectangular Plan**
15. Dimensions in feet: **1604 square feet**
16. Number of stories: **1½**
17. Primary external wall material(s): **Wood / Horizontal Siding**
18. Roof configuration: **Gabled Roof / Front Gabled Roof**
19. Primary external roof material: **Metal Roof**
20. Special features: **Porch, Chimney**
21. General architectural description:  
**This building consists of: an original 1½-story front gabled section, which measures 22' N-S (across) by 41' E-W (deep); a narrow shed-roofed addition to the north elevation, which measures 12' N-S by 41' E-W; a shed-roofed extension to the east elevation, which measures 15' N-S by 14' E-W. The building is supported by a low stone foundation, and its exterior walls are clad with painted pale blue horizontal wood siding with painted white 1" by 4" corner boards. The main front gabled roof and the shed-roofed extensions, are covered with corrugated metal, and the eaves are boxed with painted white wood trim. A red brick chimney is located near the east end of the north-facing roof slope. The building's facade fronts directly onto the front sidewalk along Fir Street on the west elevation. A painted pale blue glass-in-wood-frame door, with a transom light, enters the south end of the facade from a small concrete porch covered by a gabled hood with knee brace supports. A non-historic 18-light fixed-pane window penetrates the facade's upper gable end, while a large 2/1 window penetrates the facade wall north of the entry door. Three sets of paired 1/1 double-hung sash windows penetrate the south elevation. Two narrow, vertically-oriented, fixed-pane windows, and a large single-paned window, penetrate north elevation along the long shed-roofed addition. A rear door enters the east elevation from a shed-roofed patio.**
22. Architectural style: **No Defined Style**  
 Building type:

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23. Landscape or special setting features:

**This building is located on the east side of N. Fir Street, immediately north of the alley in the block between Colorado and Columbia Avenues. The building fronts directly onto the front sidewalk. A garage and shed are at the rear of the property.**

24. Associated buildings, features or objects:

**Garage (THAS #99)**

**A wood frame garage (THAS #99) is located near the rear east end of the property. The garage is composed of a main gabled section which measures approximately 14' N-S by 20' E-W, and a shed-roofed extension to the north elevation which measures approximately 8' by 8'. The shed-roofed extension is of plywood construction. The garage is supported by a stone and concrete foundation with log piers, and its exterior walls are clad with painted pale blue corrugated metal. The garage roof is a moderately-pitched front gable, with wood shingles, and with painted white rafter ends exposed beneath the eaves. Decorative purlins, with knee braces, are in the upper gable ends. A painted pale blue vertical wood plank door enters the west elevation. Two 2-light windows penetrate the south elevation. A single 2-light window penetrates the west elevation.**

**Shed**

**A shed, which measures approximately 8' N-S by 30' E-W, abuts the west end of the garage. This structure is supported by a wood timbers on grade foundation, while its exterior walls are made of painted pale blue plywood. A shed roof is covered with corrugated metal roofing material, with painted white rafter ends exposed beneath the eaves. A painted pale blue solid wood door enters the south elevation. A 1x1 horizontal sliding window, in a metal frame, penetrates the south elevation. The north elevation is penetrated by multiple single-light windows.**

### IV. ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY

- |                           |                                    |              |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------|
| 25. Date of construction: | Estimate:                          | Actual: 1886 |
| Source of information:    | Sanborn Insurance map, August 1886 |              |
| 26. Architect:            | Unknown                            |              |
| Source of information:    | N/A                                |              |
| 27. Builder:              | Unknown                            |              |
| Source of information:    | N/A                                |              |
| 28. Original owner:       | Unknown                            |              |
| Source of information:    | N/S                                |              |

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29. Construction history:

Sanborn Insurance maps reveal that this property was first developed in 1886. The August 1886 Sanborn map depicts a 1½-story building with a single-story extension to the rear. The 1886 footprint closely matches that of the extant building, including its rear shed-roofed extension, but without the long addition on the north elevation. On the 1886 Sanborn map, the building's footprint is labeled "1½ Dwg. B. C. (New)." "(Dwg. is an abbreviation for "Dwelling;" "B. C." denotes "Being Constructed." The building's use is labeled as "Off." (Office) on the 1890, 1893, and 1899 Sanborn maps, while the 1904, 1908 and 1922 Sanborn maps label its use as "Telephone Exchange." The extant shed-roofed extension to the north elevation predates 1986. It reportedly dates from the 1970s. The Sanborn maps also indicate that the garage (THAS #99) and shed at the rear of the property were both constructed after 1922. The Sanborn maps do not depict any secondary buildings on the property through 1908. The 1922 Sanborn map depicts a small building in the rear northeast corner of the lot which no longer exists.

30. Original location:  Moved: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of move(s): \_\_\_\_\_

### V. HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS

31. Original use(s): **Domestic / Single Dwelling**
32. Intermediate use(s): **Business/Professional / Office**  
**Communications Facility (Telephone Exchange Building)**
33. Current use(s): **Education / School**
34. Site type(s): **Originally a dwelling; Telluride's Telephone Exchange office for many years; presently used as a preschool.**

35. Historical background:

Constructed in 1886, this building served initially as a small dwelling, less than a block from Colorado Avenue, Telluride's main street. By the late 1890s, it was an office building, and by 1903, it had become the location of Telluride's Telephone Exchange. Operated by the Colorado Telephone Exchange and later the Mountain States Telephone and Telegraph Company, the telephone exchange was located in this building for many years.

Alexander Graham Bell exhibited his new invention, the electric telephone, at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia, in 1876. Bell registered his patents for the device in 1876 and 1877. Additional technological advances over the following year allowed the telephone to become commercially viable. Telephone communication arrived in Colorado in 1879, when the recently formed Bell Telephone Company and Western Union Telegraph Company were busy competing for control of the infant business. At that early date, the only cities in the world with active telephone exchanges were Boston, Chicago, and New Haven, Connecticut.

Harvard-educated Frederick O. Vaille arrived in Denver in July 1878 with a vision of establishing a profitable enterprise of some sort in the young state. After exploring Denver, Central City and several other booming mining-era locations, he discovered that what these communities needed was an efficient way to communicate. Vaille traveled to Boston, where he secured a license to start a telephone system in Colorado using Bell Telephone Company equipment. This was the seventeenth franchise issued in the United States by the Bell Company. In October 1878, Vaille returned to Colorado and formed a partnership with a friend, smelter manager and future banker Henry Wolcott. Wolcott's brother, a successful attorney and state senator (later a US senator) by the name of Edward Wolcott, also joined the firm. The partners launched their new business as the Denver

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Telephone Dispatch Company. Vaile immediately started seeking subscribers, promising that a telephone exchange would be opened in the city once 125 customers signed up for the service. He quickly succeeded in securing an adequate number of subscribers and Denver joined an elite group of cities when the first telephone exchange opened for business there on 24 February 1879.

In 1881, Vaile joined another group of Denver businessmen to establish the Colorado Telephone Company, which absorbed the Denver Telephone Dispatch Company. He became the firm's first general manager, with Henry Wolcott serving as president. The telephone system grew within Denver, reaching an ever-expanding number of residences and businesses. Soon the first long distance lines in the state were installed between Denver and the boomtowns of Georgetown and Boulder. During the 1880s, the company built or acquired exchanges that connected the additional communities of Colorado Springs, Pueblo, Leadville, Golden, Longmont and Central City. The invention of copper wire in 1883 made true long distance telephone communication possible, connecting the state's most populated towns. After occupying a series of rented rooms in downtown office buildings, in 1890 the company constructed a building of its own at 1447 Lawrence St. By 1893, there were almost 2,800 telephones in Colorado, with more than 1,700 of them located in Denver. Colorado Business Directory listings for Telluride indicate that the Colorado Telephone Exchange opened an office in Telluride between 1900 and 1903. A. D. Graham and S. E. Rodda were among the company's earliest agents in Telluride.

The Telephone Exchange existed in this building through 1922, and for an unknown number of years afterwards. According to a previous survey, completed in 1986, the building served as an art studio for Richard Wagner in the 1960s and 1970s. Wagner at that time was reportedly a nationally known artist who specialized in mountain landscapes. In the late 1970s and 1980s, this property was owned by Martha Brown of Telluride. The building is currently used primarily as a preschool. It has been owned by Randy's Telluride Legacy LLC from 2004 to the present.

36. Sources of information:

Colorado Business Directory listings for Telluride, 1881-1950.

Hackenburg, Herbert J. Jr. *Muttering Machines to Laser Beams: A History of Mountain Bell*. Denver, CO: Mountain Bell, 1986.

Stone, Wilbur Fisk. *History of Colorado*. Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1918.

"San Miguel County Assessor Data Site." <http://sanmiguel.valuwest.net>

San Miguel County Property Appraisal Record.

Sanborn Insurance maps, August 1886, October 1890, February 1893, December 1899, July 1904, November 1908, October 1922.

Simmons, Laurie and Christine Whitacre. *Historic Building Inventory Record*, May 1986.

McWilliams, Carl and Ron Sladek. "Sterling Telephone Exchange Building" (5LO.184) Colorado Cultural Resource Survey Architectural Inventory Form, February 26, 2013.

Telluride Historical Museum. [www.telluridemesuem.org](http://www.telluridemesuem.org)

Town of Telluride Building Department building permit files.

Town of Telluride Planning Department files.

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## VI. SIGNIFICANCE

37. Local landmark designation:    Yes            No     Date of designation:

Designating authority:

38. Applicable National Register criteria:

A. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of our history;

B. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;

C. Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguished entity whose components may lack individual distinction;

D. Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in history or prehistory.

Qualifies under Criteria Considerations A through G (see Manual).

**xx** Does not meet any of the above National Register criteria.

Telluride Standards for Designation:

7-505.A.1. The structure is representative of a unique historical social activity of an era

7-505.A.2. The structure dominates the neighborhood by virtue of its mass, architecture or location

7-505.A.3. The structure was an historically or architecturally important public building

7-505.A.4. The structure has a unique historical significance beyond a local level

7-505.A.5. The parcel was the site of an important historic event or activity

**xx** 7-505.A.6. The structure has a "contributing or qualified contributing" rating on the THAS

39. Area(s) of significance:    **Architecture, Communications**

40. Period of significance:    **1886; circa 1904-1960**

41. Level of significance:    National:                            State:                            Local: **xx**

42. Statement of significance:

**This building is historically significant primarily for its long use as Telluride's Telephone Exchange during the early decades of the twentieth century. It is also architecturally significant for its early, 1886 date of construction and representative wood frame front gabled plan. Due to some loss of integrity, the building is not individually eligible for inclusion in the National or State Registers. The primary structure qualifies as a supporting resource within the Telluride National Historic Landmark District. The garage (THAS #99) is rated as noncontributing without qualifications buildings within the Landmark District. The shed is a non-designated structure.**

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43. Assessment of historic physical integrity related to significance:

**The former Telephone Exchange building displays a somewhat less than ideal standard of physical integrity, relative to the seven aspects of integrity as defined by the National Park Service and the Colorado Historical Society, Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation - setting, location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. Alterations to the historic building include the large window in the facade's upper gable end, the shed-roofed addition to the north elevation, and modifications to the front entry door. The alterations are not recent, however, as they all date from prior to 1986.**

### VII. NATIONAL REGISTER ELIGIBILITY ASSESSMENT

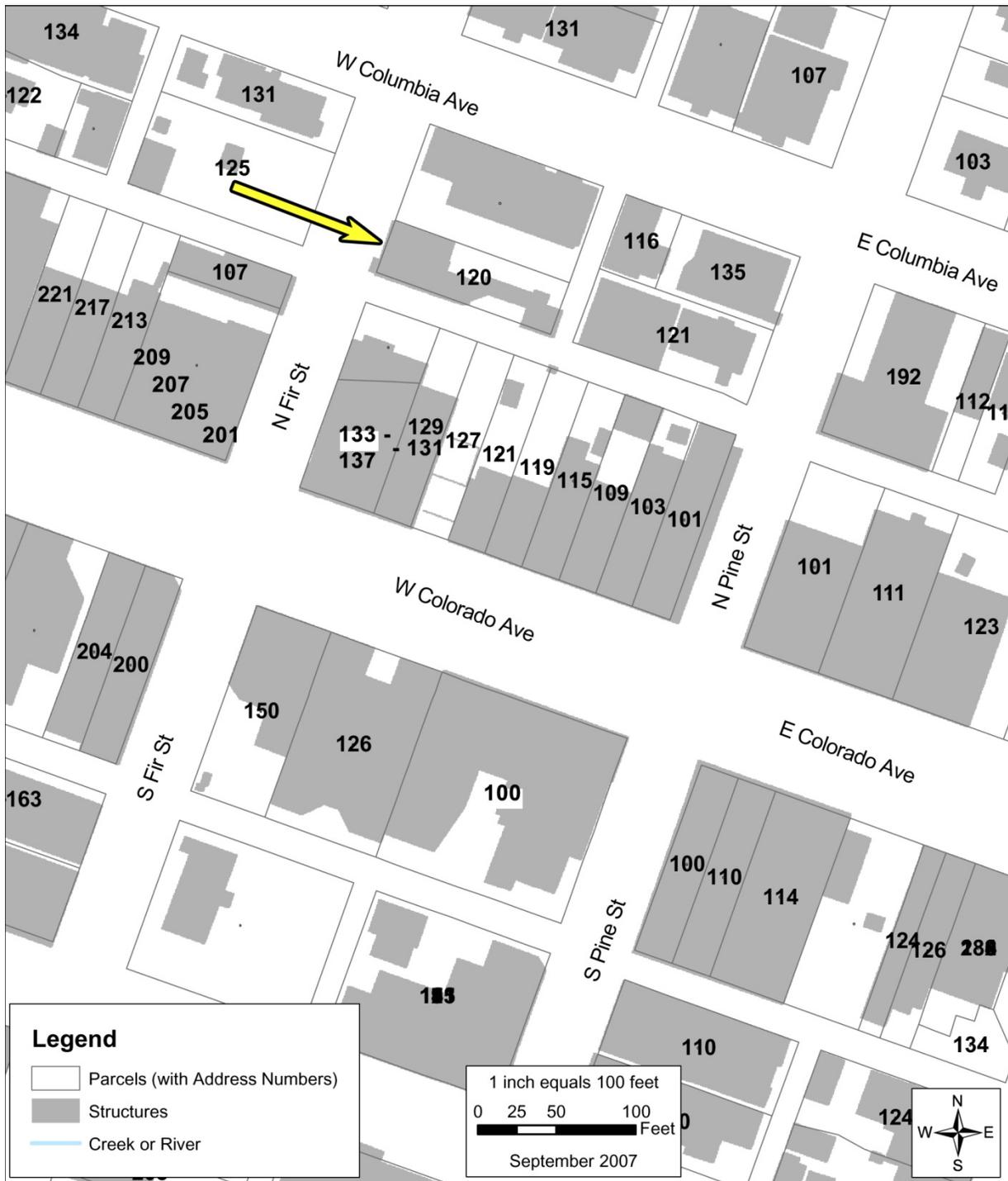
44. National Register eligibility field assessment: **Not Individually Eligible / Contributing to District**  
 Local landmark eligibility field assessment: **Eligible / Supporting to District**
45. Is there National Register district potential? Yes  No
- Discuss: **This property is located within the Telluride National Historic Landmark District.**
- If there is National Register district potential, is this building: Contributing Noncontributing N/A:
46. If the building is in existing National Register district, is it: Contributing  Noncontributing N/A:

### VIII. RECORDING INFORMATION

- |                           |   |               |   |
|---------------------------|---|---------------|---|
| 47. Photograph number(s): | <b>CD #7, Images 197-203</b>  | CDs filed at: | <b>Town of Telluride</b>                    |
| 48. Report title:         | <b>Town of Telluride Re-Survey of Historic Structures</b>             |               | <b>Planning and Building<br/>Department</b> |
| 49. Date(s):              | <b>August 5, 2011; revised April 12, 2013</b>                         |               | <b>113 West Columbia Avenue</b>             |
| 50. Recorder(s):          | <b>Carl McWilliams<br/>Ron Sladek</b>                                 |               | <b>Telluride, CO 81435</b>                  |
| 51. Organizations:        | <b>Cultural Resource Historians<br/>Tatanka Historical Associates</b> |               |   |
| 52. Address:              | <b>1607 Dogwood Court<br/>Fort Collins, CO 80525</b>                  |               |   |
| 53. Phone number(s):      | <b>(970) 493-5270</b>   |               |   |

# Architectural Inventory Form

## Sketch Map



# Architectural Inventory Form

## Location Map

