



Idaho State University

Introduction

The Civilian Conservation Corps, or the CCC, was a federal program active from 1933-1942. Established by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the CCC was integral to the New Deal Programs to alleviate unemployment for men and conserve natural resources after the Great Depression. [2] While in the CCC, men were responsible for conservation projects under a variety of departments. The CCC Department of Grazing covered responsibilities that included creating wells and reservoirs, building corrals and roads, and removing rodents and predators in order to improve grazing for ranchers. [3]

The CCC Department of Grazing had some known camps, specifically DG-94 [4], near the current INL site boundary. Some of their projects are still evident at INL, specifically, large basalt snow fences. Snow fences were constructed in order to collect snowfall during the winter months which, when melted, would create a watering hole within a reservoir for livestock. These snow fences, while degrading, are still effective today.

Research Questions

- Are there variations among the five fences regarding their physical characteristics, orientation, and state of preservation?
- Where on the landscape are these fences located?

Methods

In order to address our research questions, each of the five known snow fences were fully documented adhering to the INL CRMO standards of site recordation and evaluation (MCP-8011). This included taking site photos, recording snow fence measurements, and obtaining GPS information for each fence. Further methods included capturing photos to create structure from motion using Agisoft Metashape Pro and conducting research on the CCC using National Archive records, Census data, and CCC websites.



North end of 10BT2366.



South end of 10BT2365.



South end of 10BT2364.



Lattice fencing within 10BT2364.



BEA-23-17-01(6/6/2023): Water still present in snow fence reservoir.

Results

The five fences were recorded over a period of three weeks in the summer of 2023. Each snow fence is constructed of naturally occurring basalt with imported wood for the lattice fence crest. Each wall is oriented on a NW-SE axis, taking advantage of the regular westerly winds on the Snake River Plain. The maximum width, height, and length varied; however, their general style is consistent (see Table 1). Basalt rocks were dry stacked in an orderly fashion to make up the exterior walls and the center was filled of random cobbles of angular basalt. The wooden posts were supported inside the wall, and lattice fence was then attached to the posts ultimately creating structures that were over 14 feet tall. Each snow fence is in a low laying area on the landscape with basalt ridges either directly adjacent or nearby (except for 10BT2363). While all are still standing and visible, most are degrading with collapsed sections of walls and nearly the complete loss of the lattice fence.

Site Number	Length	Courses	North Height	North End Max Width	South End Height	South End Max Width
10BT2363	207 feet	10	63 inches**	47 inches*	54 inches**	45.5 inches*
10BT2364	204 feet	12	62 inches	57 inches	62 inches	63 inches
10BT2365	262 feet	10	30 inches*	53.5 inches*	40 inches*	48 inches*
10BT2366	130 feet	6-10	53 inches	39 inches	52 inches	42 inches
BEA-23-17-01	155 feet	10-12	66 inches	72 inches	74 inches*	72 inches*

Table 1: displaying the measurements of each snow fence.
*Measurement is of partially collapsed end.
**Measurement taken further into fence, 13 & 26 feet away from end, due to collapsed/tapered nature.



BEA-23-17-01: North end construction style.

BEA-23-17-01: Top-down view showing collapsed nature.

Conclusion

Based on the recordation of each of the five snow fences, they share similar locations and surrounding geomorphological features, but there are variations present in length, width, and height. The most intact fences vary from 130-204 feet in length, 39-72 inches in width, and 52-66 inches in height. These results have raised additional research questions including but not limited to:

- Are these snow fences unique to the Snake River Plain?
- What factors contributed to the variation in construction of these snow fences?

[1] "First Inaugural Address of Franklin D. Roosevelt." *Yale Law School: The Avalon Project*, news release, March 4, 1933, 2008. https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/froosl.asp.
[2] "CCC Brief History." *CCC Legacy*, 2018. http://ccclegacy.org/CCC_Brief_History.html.
[3] "The Color of Grazing." *Prologue Magazine: Pieces of History*, 2017. Vol. 49, No. 3. <https://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2017/fall/ccc-color>.
[4] US Census Bureau, 1940. Map showing western Moreland Precinct (6-24), including CCC Camp DG-94 (6-24), Bingham County, Idaho (using Bureau of Highways, 1937, *State-wide Highway Planning Survey*). <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSK3-4YDC?i=153&cc=25776>.
(<https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSK3-4YDC?i=153&cc=25776>; accessed 15 June 2023), citing NARA microfilm publication A3378 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 2003).