NDCRS *ARCHITECTURAL* SITE FORM
PAGE 1

Field Code Mac-Cass-01 **SITS# 32** **RM** **653**

SITE IDENTIFICATION

Map Quad Ft Ransom Site Name Fort Ransom School
Map Quad _____ Site Name Johnny Nelson School

LTL ___	TWP 135	R 58	SEC 11	QQQ 7	QQ 6	Q 5
LTL ___	TWP _____	R _____	SEC _____	QQQ _____	QQ _____	Q _____
LTL ___	TWP _____	R _____	SEC _____	QQQ _____	QQ _____	Q _____
LTL ___	TWP _____	R _____	SEC _____	QQQ _____	QQ _____	Q _____

NAD 1983, **UTM** 5152730 **N** **ZONE** 14N
NAD 1983, **UTM** 581733 **E**

Subsection:
1 = N½
2 = E½
3 = S½
4 = W½
5 = NE¼
6 = SE¼
7 = SW¼
8 = NW¼

City: Fort Ransom

Street Number: _____

Street Name: _____

Urban Legal Description: _____

SITE DATA

Total # ***Architectural*** Features: **1**

Fieldwork Date: **07/22/2019**

Reconnaissance Survey ___ Intensive Survey ✔

Project & Principal Investigator:

Project: Cass County Electric Mill Road; PI: Daan Means

Report Title & Author(s):

Report Title: Cass County Electric Cooperative's Mill Road Electric Line: A Class III Cultural Resource Inventory in Cass County, North Dakota; Author: Daan Means

Contracting firm or Agency completing the form:

Metcalf Archaeological Consultants, Inc.

Additional Information:

SHSND USE

Area of Significance	2	Ecozone	15	Verified Site	1	CR Type	2
Area of Significance		Ecozone					
Area of Significance		Ecozone					

Recorded By **D. Means** **Date Recorded** **07/22/2019**
(First Name & Last Name) **(mm/dd/year)**

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NDCRS *ARCHITECTURAL* SITE FORM
PAGE 2—*Feature Data*

Field Code Mac-Cass-01 **SITS# 32 RM 653**

Complete one Page 2 for *each* architectural feature at the site.

Architectural Feature # 1

Construction Date _____ Feature Type 9 Condition 6

Feature Date 3 Context 7 Plan Shape 2

Structural System 25 Primary Exterior 26 Style Not Applicable

Original Owner's Ethnicity _____ Secondary Exterior N/A Architect/Builder _____

Other Information: _____

Foundation Concrete Stories 1.0

Roof/Cornice Hipped; asphalt shingle

Window Some original openings intact, many windows replaced

Dating Method(s): _____

***Feature* Preservation Recommendation(s) (Check all that apply)**:

___ Individual nomination

___ Contributes to a potential district

___ No nomination potential

___ Will not contribute to a district

___ Potential district—feature would be a contributing element if other properties constitute a district

✔ Thematic nomination potential

___ Component of a historic site or landscape

___ Moved (specify all applicable choices)—a) relocation occurred within a historic period; b) recreates original site, orientation, landscape, & spatial relationships; c) compatible in context with neighboring structures; d) relocation has damaged eligibility

___ Historical associations require further investigation

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NDCRS *ARCHITECTURAL* SITE FORM
PAGE 3—*Feature Data*

Field Code Mac-Cass-01 **SITS# 32 RM 653**

Complete a Page 3 for each feature.

1. *Feature* Description, Integrity, Eligibility:

DESCRIPTION: Feature 1 is the Fort Ransom School, a wood-framed building built c. 1915 (ND Department of Public Instruction 1914). The feature has a square footprint with a concrete foundation. The exterior is clad in narrow clapboard siding and the hipped roof is covered in T-lock asphalt shingles. Above the entry, which is centered in a square bay that projects approximately three feet from the front of the building, is a square bell tower with a flared pyramidal cap, also covered in asphalt shingles. There is no bell present in the bell tower. The entrance consists of a single, standard, side-hung door with a fixed lite. The door is not original to the building and vertical particle-board siding surrounds the entry suggesting the original door was slightly taller, likely with a transom window and/or side lites. There are two larger windows on both sides of the entry and two basement lites. Six windows are on the north elevation, six similar windows and two basement lites are on the west elevation, and five are on the south elevation. The original window openings are intact, but the windows themselves have been replaced. All are either two-lite single-hung sash or single-lite casements that occupy only the bottom half of the original openings. The upper portion of the original window openings have been in-filled with vertical siding.

A second historic wood-framed schoolhouse, formerly the Johnny Nelson School, was moved to the site and added onto the original Fort Ransom School sometime in the early 1950s (Thorfinnson 1978). This singe-story, hip-roofed structure is attached by a semi-subterranean gable-roofed passage on the south elevation of the main school building. When it was moved to its current location, it was placed on a raised concrete-block foundation. It is sided in narrow clapboards and has T-lock asphalt shingles on its hipped roof. The main entry is intact,on the east elevation, but is no longer in use as it is above grade, with no stairway. The entry is centered within a projecting central bay that has a closed gable roof. One-over-one-lite windows flank the entry bay and one-over-one-lite basement windows pierce the mid-century foundation. A shed-roofed addition is located along the south elevation, with a standard door providing access, at-grade, from the east elevation. Windows on the south elevation consist of four one-over-one-lite windows. There is one one-over-one-lite double-hung window on the north elevation as well. A rear entrance is located on the west elevation of the structure, accessed by an ADA-compliant ramp. This entrance is not original and consists of a standard steel door where a window once was. Other original window openings remain intact. Four window openings are to the north of this door; two have been boarded up with vertical siding while the remaining two contain modern aluminum windows.

INTEGRITY: The Fort Ransom School is in good condition. It has experienced a number of alterations including the replacement of original doors and windows and the addition of the second schoolhouse to the south. However, it retains sufficient integrity to convey historic character. The added Johnny Nelson Schoolhouse is in good condition, but has experienced more substantial modification including removal from its original setting, placement on a raised foundation, and addition and alteration of openings.

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NDCRS *ARCHITECTURAL* SITE FORM
PAGE 4—*SITE DESCRIPTION*

Field Code Mac-Cass-01 **SITS# 32 RM 653**

Complete one Page 4 for the entire *site*.

2. Owner's Contact Information:

3. Access (to rural areas):

The site is located on the west side of Mill Road, 0.25 miles northwest from the intersection of Mill Rd and W Hjelle Pkwy in Fort Ransom, ND.

4. Site Area (**ft²**): 4,600

5. Description of ***SETTING***:

The site is set on the west side of Mill Road on the northwest edge of Fort Ransom, in the Sheyenne River Valley. The site has a well-manicured lawn, with parking along the east and designated playground areas to the west and north. Across Mill Road is the Standing Rock Lutheran Church. Further north and south is scattered residential development.

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NDCRS *ARCHITECTURAL* SITE FORM
PAGE 5—*SITE DESCRIPTION*

Field Code Mac-Cass-01 **SITS# 32 RM 653**

6. *Summary of ALL* Site Features & Evaluation of Significance:

This site is the Fort Ransom School which is made up of two historic schoolhouses, the c. 1915 Fort Ransom School and the contemporaneous Johnny Nelson Schoolhouse moved to the site as an addition to the Fort Ransom School in the 1950s. Both are wood-framed, hip-roofed schoolhouses, clad in horizontal clapboards. The window openings are largely intact, though the original windows have been replaced or removed in both structures. The two schoolhouses are linked by a semi-subterranean passageway, which runs north-south between the two. Playground equipment is located directly behind the school (to the west) and to the north. A paved parking area is along the east side of the school and a modern prefabricated storage building is directly south of the site.

The Fort Ransom School is in good condition and is fully operational as an elementary school. The original structure was built c. 1915 in the early years of school consolidation. The state legislature passed the first school consolidation law in 1910 to encourage re-organization of school districts and ease the tax burden on those living in rural areas and small towns (Tweton 2008). At one time, four or five schools were in the vicinity of Fort Ransom. In the 1950s, the Johnny Nelson one-room schoolhouse located in the southwest part of Fort Ransom Township was relocated and laid on new foundations as an addition to the Fort Ransom School--illustrating the gradual decline of one-room schools experienced throughout the state as consolidation continued through the present day (Thorfinnson 1978).

The Fort Ransom School has experienced a number of modifications over time, including the addition of the Johnny Nelson Schoolhouse. However, it has remained relatively unchanged for past fifty years. Loss of original window sash and replacement of original doors as affected integrity of materials and design. But overall, the window openings remain intact and the addition is spaced apart from the original building such that it retains sufficient integrity to convey its historic character. Furthermore, though the Johnny Nelson Schoolhouse has been relocated, affecting integrity of setting, design, feeling, and association, fifty years have passed since this major change.

ELIGIBILITY: Because this site reflects the theme of consolidation of rural and small town schools as it played out in North Dakota communities throughout the first half of the 20th Century, Metcalf recognizes thematic nomination potential under Criterion A, in an education context. Metcalf recommends the site eligible for inclusion in the NRHP provided other small schoolhouses retain sufficient integrity to support a Multiple Property Documentation.

7. References/Comments:

ND Department of Public Instruction (1914) Thirteenth Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Journal Publishing Co., Devils Lake; Thorfinnson (1978) Fort Ransom Area History, 1878-1978. Fort Ransom Community Club, Fort Ransom; Tweton, Jerome (2008) "The Future of North Dakota" in North Dakota History: Readings About the Northern Plains State, State Historical Society of North Dakota, Bismarck.

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NDCRS SITE FORM
ATTACHMENTS SECTION

Field Code: Mac-Cass-01 **SITS# 32**

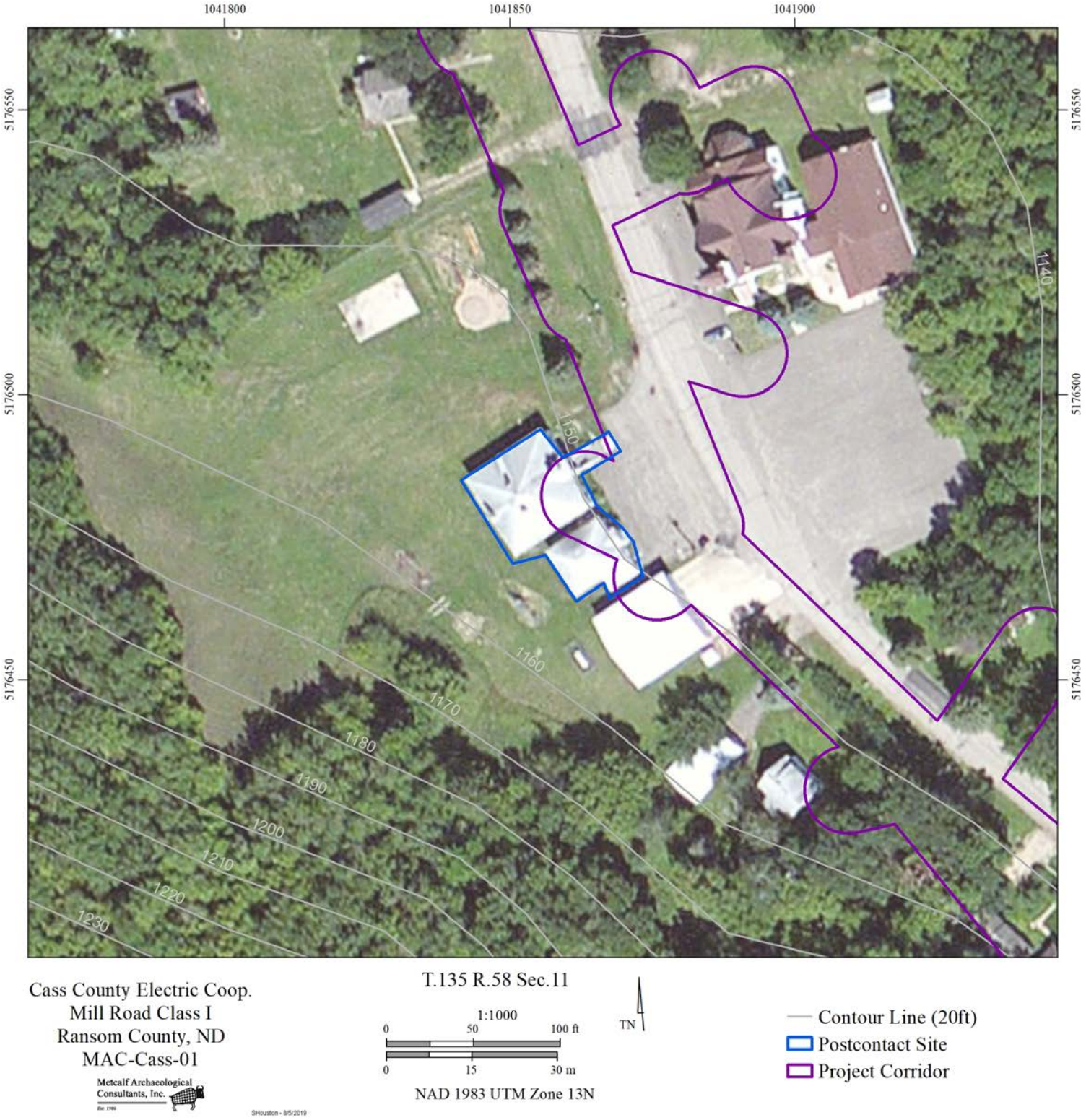


Figure 1: Sketch map of Mac-Cass-01 depicted on aerial imagery.

Recorded By: **D. Meens** **Date Recorded**: 7/22/2019

NDCRS SITE FORM
ATTACHMENTS SECTION

Field Code: Mac-Cass-01 **SITS# 32**



Figure 2: Map of Township 135N, Range 58W, Section 11. Excerpted from map by Geo. A. Ogle and Company, in *Standard Atlas of Ransom County, North Dakota* (Chicago, IL: 1910).

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Figure 3: Aerial photograph, 1941, depicting site of the Fort Ransom School prior to the addition of the Johnny Nelson Schoolhouse. ND State Water Commission 2015, Ransom County, 1941 [aerial phograph]. Aerial Imagery Map Service https://aerial.swc.nd.gov/, accessed 7/25/2019.

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ATTACHMENTS SECTION

Field Code: Mac-Cass-01 **SITS# 32**



Figure 4: Aerial photograph, 1960, depicting site of the Fort Ransom School and addition of the Johnny Nelson Schoolhouse to the south. ND State Water Commission 2015, Ransom County, 1960 [aerial phograph]. Aerial Imagery Map Service https://aerial.swc.nd.gov/, accessed 7/25/2019.

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Field Code: Mac-Cass-01 **SITS# 32**



Figure 5: Site Mac-Cass-01, Feature 1, view northwest (Image 1500).



Figure 6: Mac-Cass-01, Feature 1, view southwest (Image 1502).

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Figure 7: Mac-Cass-01, Feature 1, view northeast (Image 1504).



Figure 8: Mac-Cass-01, Feature 1, view east (Image 1505).

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