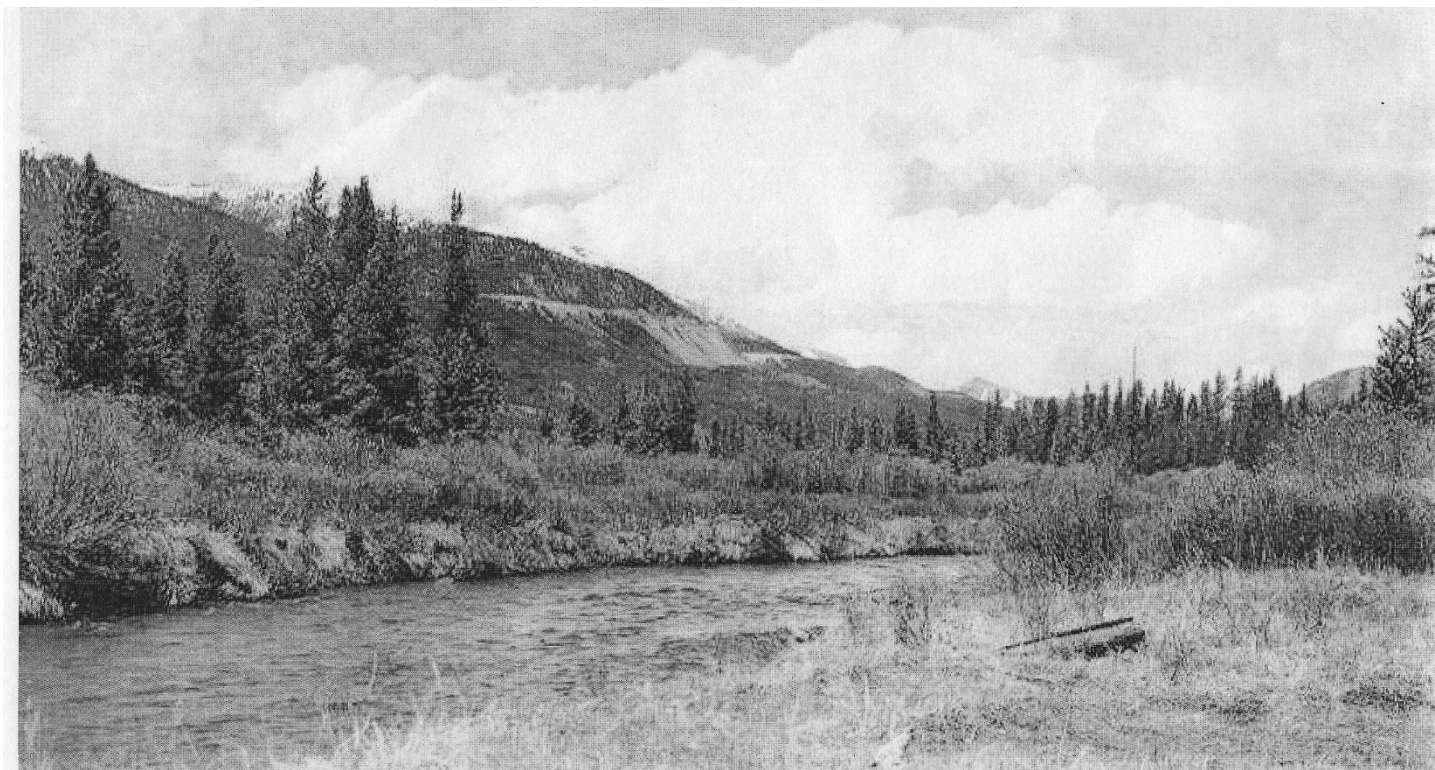


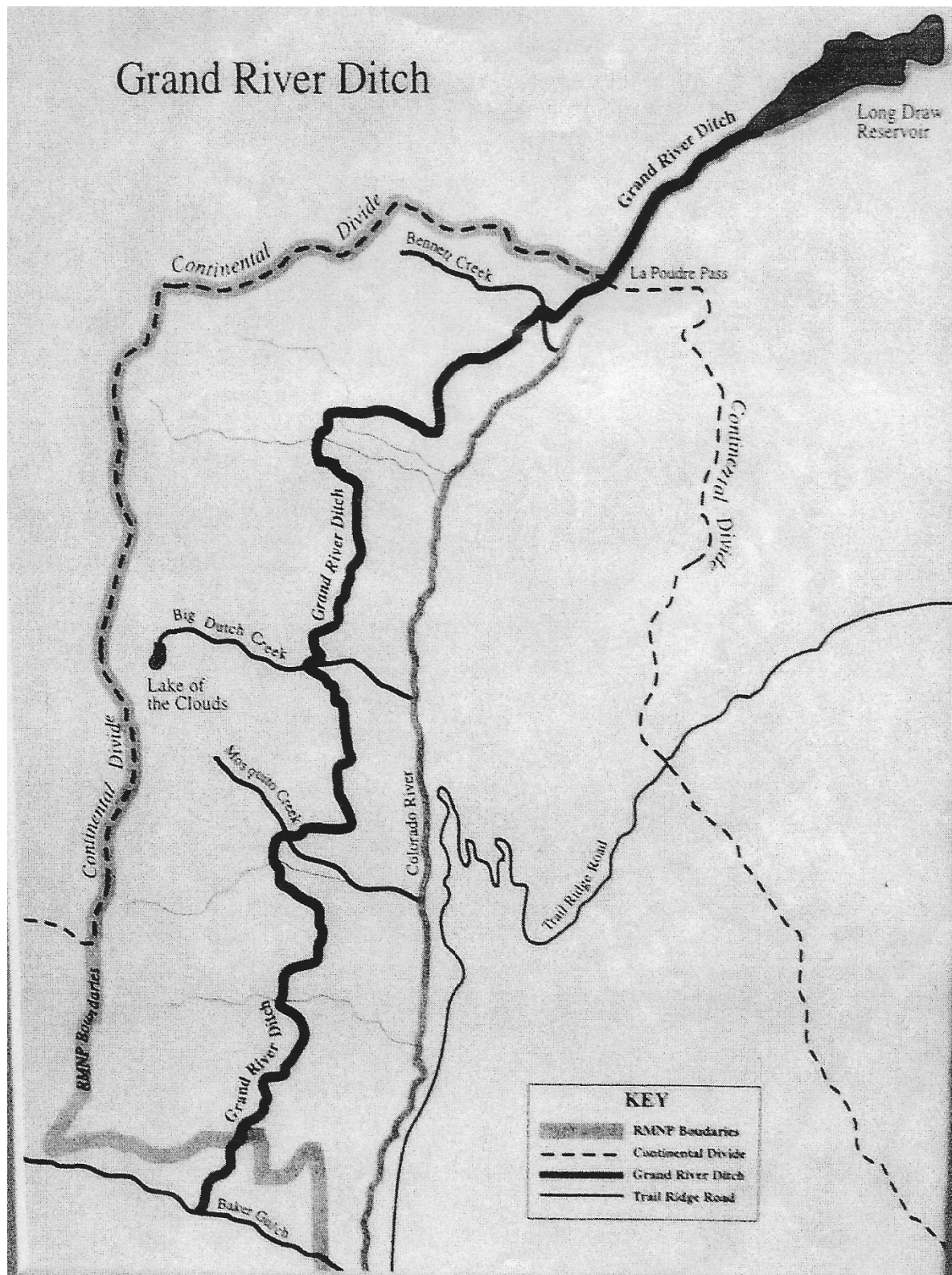
## *Grand River Ditch – Grand Ditch*

*Much of the Grand Ditch was in place before the area became a National Park. The Grand Ditch has captured snowmelt for more than a century to help irrigate farms and ranches on the high plains of eastern Colorado. La Poudre pass lies at the extreme north end of the Colorado River valley at an altitude of 10,175 feet above sea level. The designers of the project started digging the canal – the Bennet Feeder at this point in 1890, allowing the water to cross the Continental Divide through this low mountain pass. The first water transport took place 45 days later and was accomplished with only hand labor. Ditch building continued. Once through the pass, the diverted water flows into Long Draw Reservoir and then into the Cache La Poudre River and on to Fort Collins.*

*The Ditch was taken into the park boundaries under a park expansion in June of 1930. Anticipating that water rights to the Baker Gulch drainage might be jeopardized, the Water Supply and Storage Company contracted for completion of the remaining six miles of diversion in the mid 1930s. In order for the Water Supply and Storage Company to extend the ditch and build Long Draw Reservoir, it became necessary to obtain an Act of Congress permitting this construction work to be carried out on National Park Service land. The congressional approval was granted about 1934 following which construction work was started. This construction phase employed power equipment and was accomplished in about one year. The Long Draw Reservoir was constructed in 1936.*

*The results of using the power equipment left a major scar on the side of the mountain which can still be seen today. In 1985 the Grand Ditch transferred from the Colorado to the Poudre 30,000 acre feet annually. The water was distributed among 287 shareholders who live in the Poudre River Valley east of Fort Collins.*





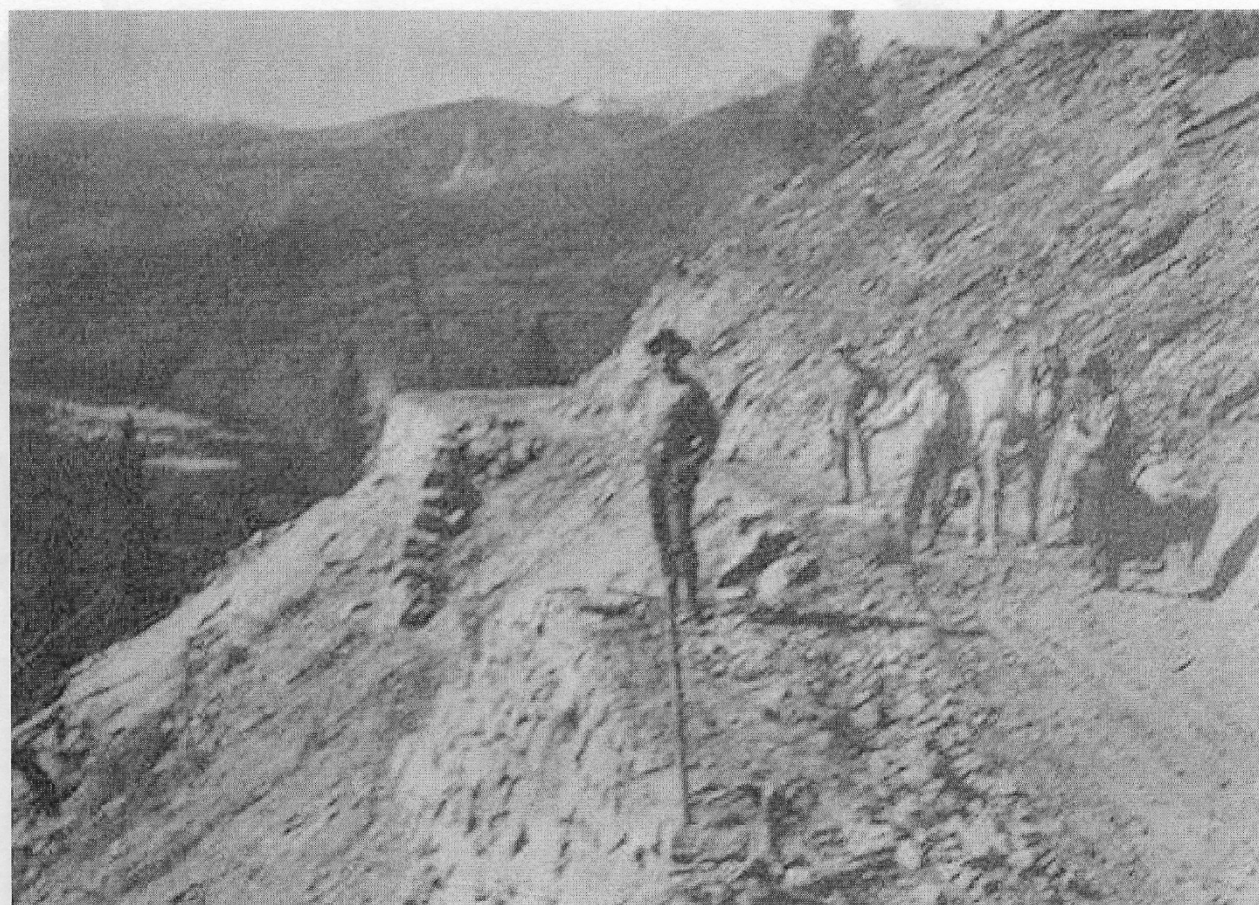
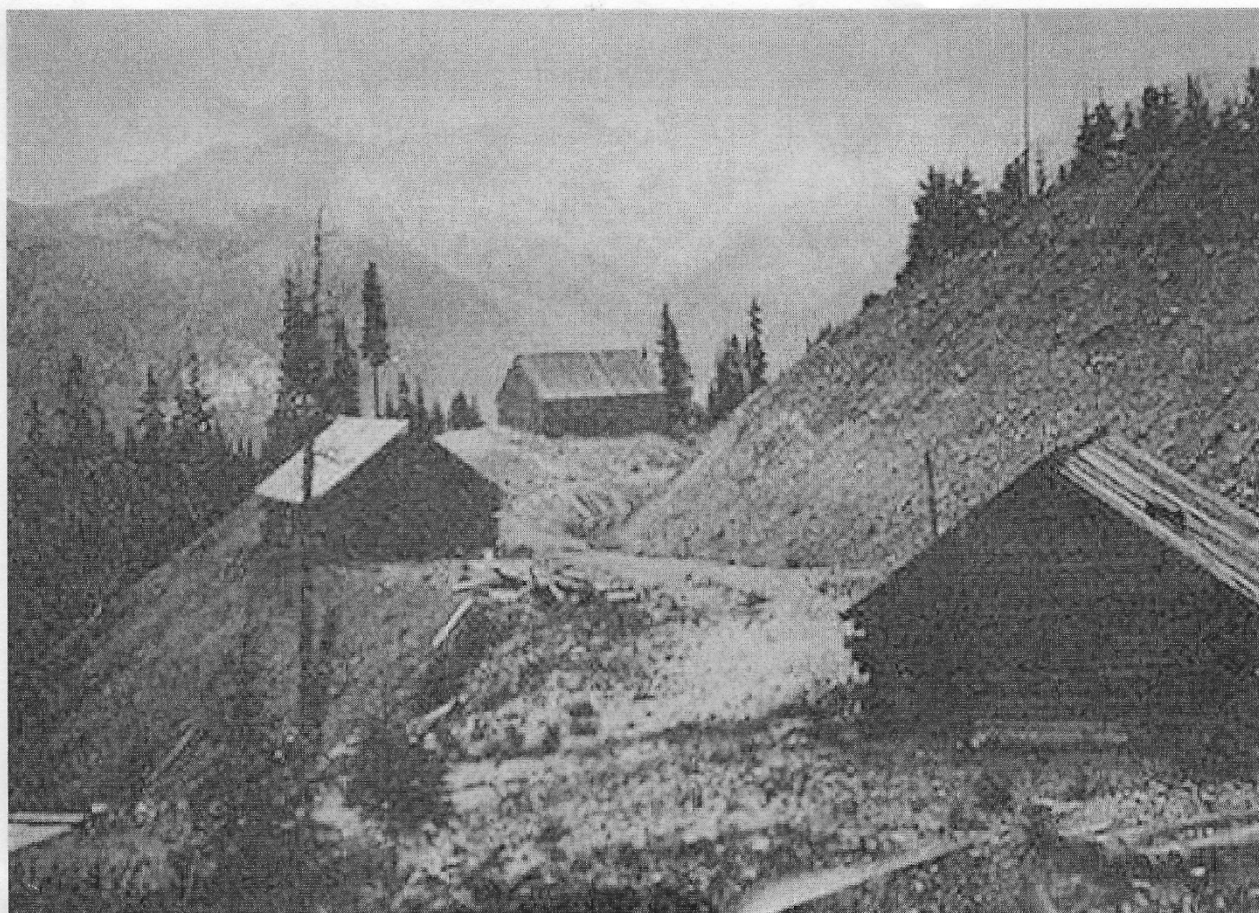
**This 14 mile long, 20' wide and 6' deep channel was designed to capture snowmelt and divert this water to help irrigate farms and ranches on the plains of eastern Colorado. It still performs this duty today.**

**The Ditch was first surveyed in 1890. Construction began in 1894 and was executed with both hand labor, and later, power equipment. The Grand Ditch was completed in the mid-1930's.**





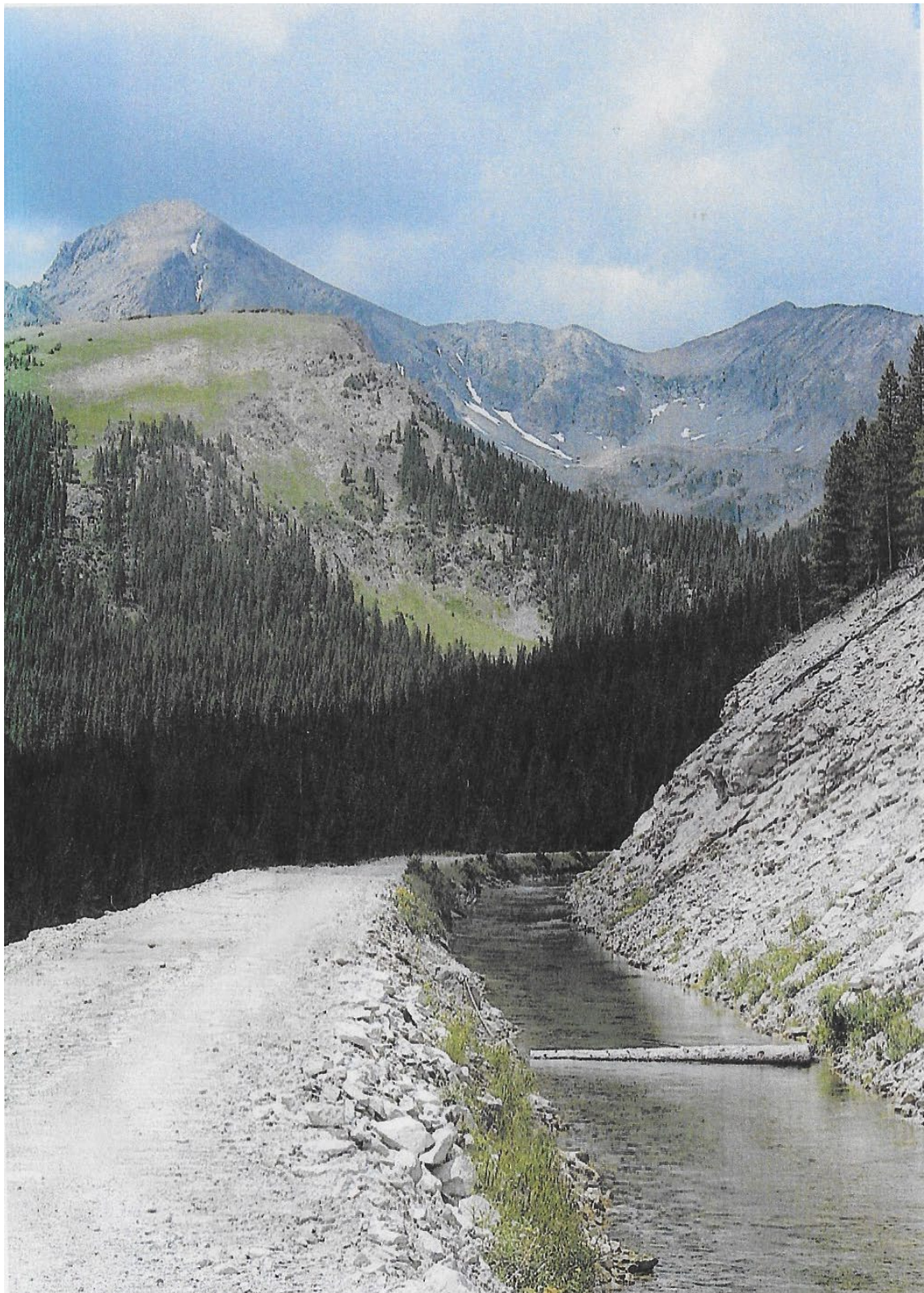




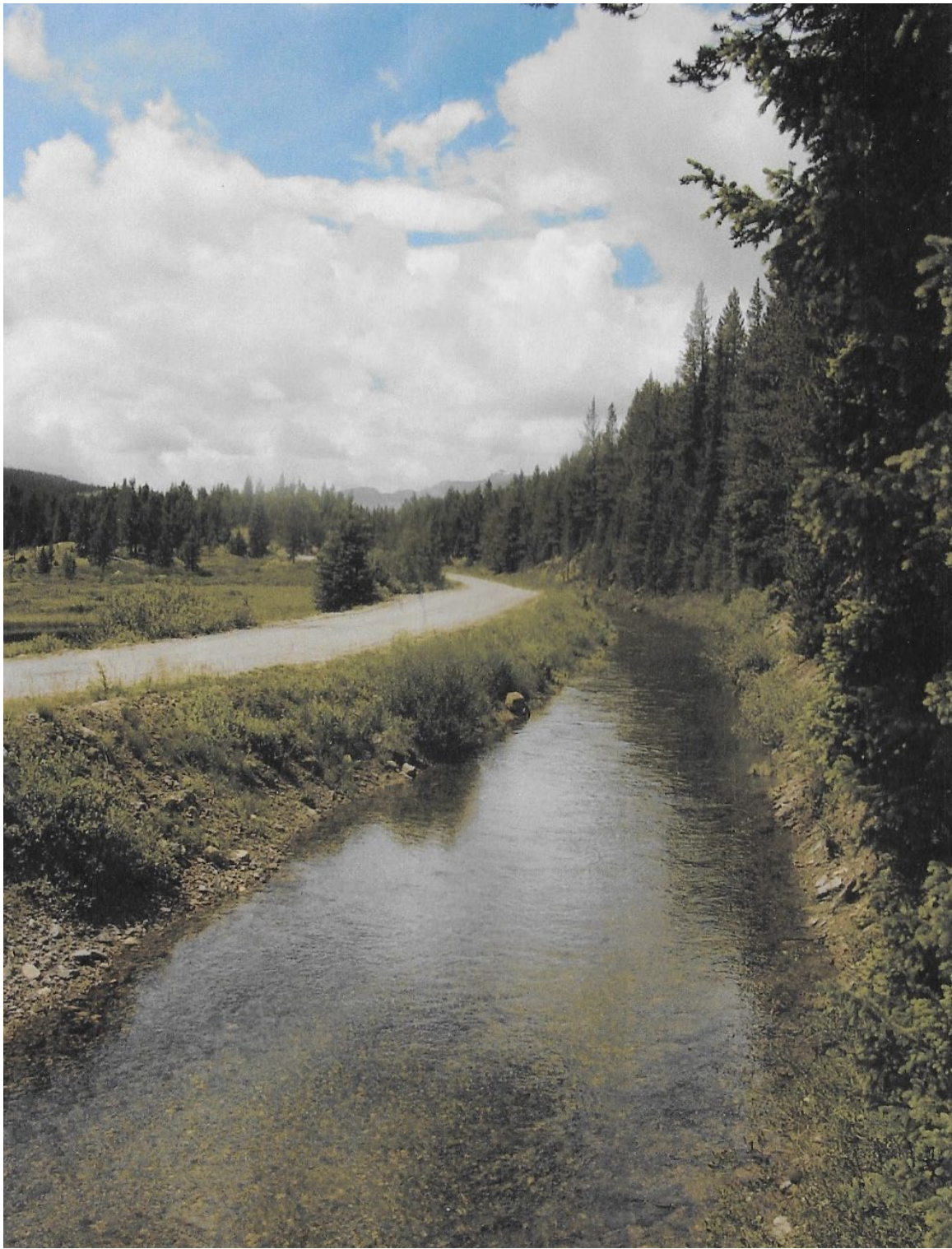


Mules packed for Grand Ditch Construction  
In front of Cairn's house on Grand Avenue

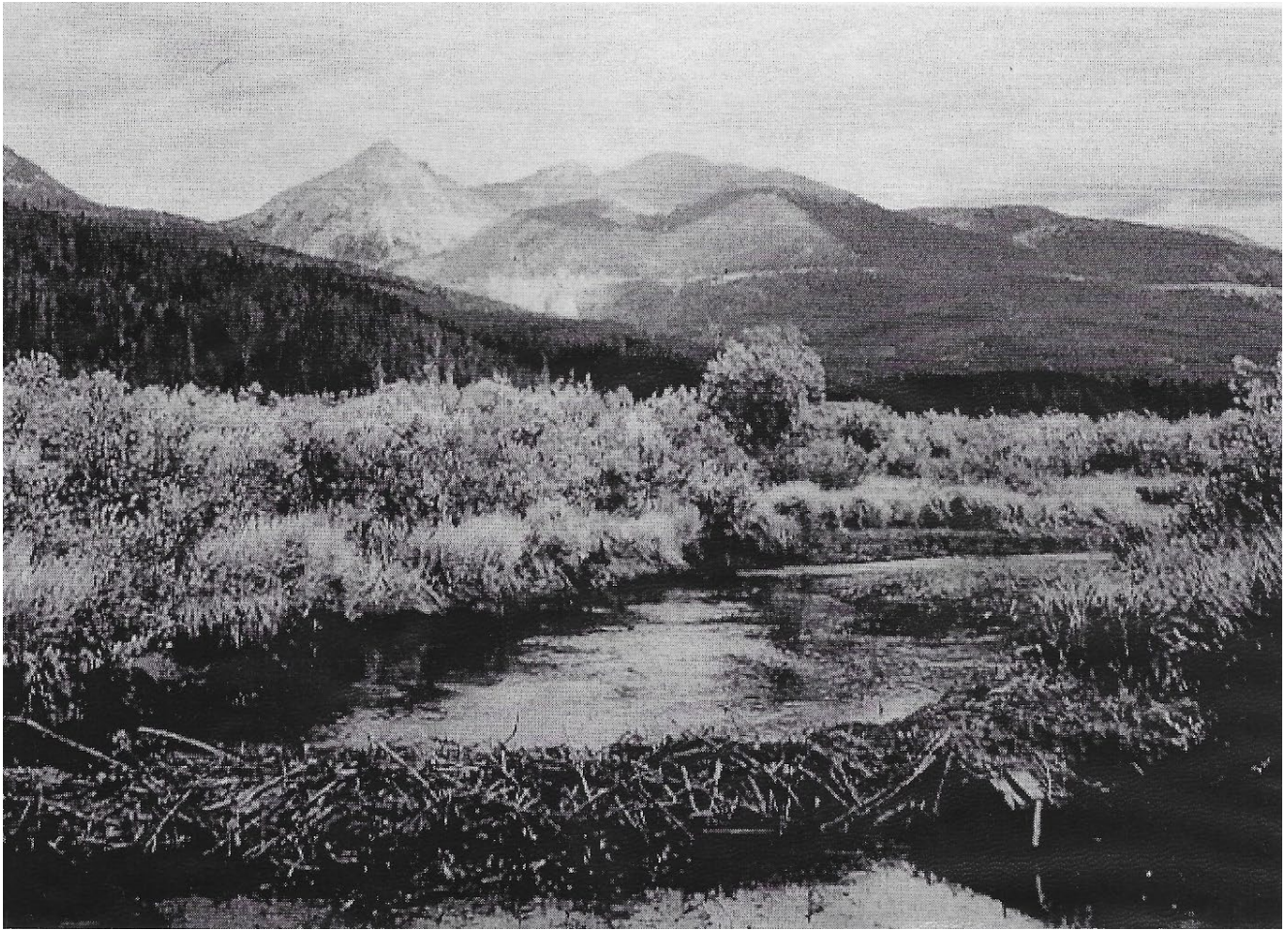












**View of the Grand Ditch from the Kawuneeche Valley**